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JCPS Conference Report No. 7:
Roundtable on the Future of Black Politics.

FOCUS

Winning Statewide Office

Illinois Comptroller Roland Burris discusses "the next frontier for black political leadership."

ILLINOIS
CONNECTICUT
MICHIGAN

Who Cares About the Black Aged?

A national organization focuses attention on the needs of the black elderly.

Can Rico Stop Minority Business "Fronts"?

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Joint Center for Political Studies

Perspective

During the past four years and eight months, some conservatives, including the president of the United States, have been preoccupied with an alleged gap between the views of black leaders and those of the black public. These commentators seem to believe that if they could document such a gap, they would discredit and thus silence the leaders—who happen to be critical of conservative policies.

A new voice has been added to the debate. Linda S. Lichter, co-director of the Center for Media and Public Affairs, has conducted a national telephone survey of blacks that purports to document the gap. Her findings were reported in the August/September issue of the American Enterprise Institute's *Public Opinion* magazine and in a September 24 op-ed article in the *New York Times*.

Dr. Lichter claims to have found sharp differences between black leaders and the black public on a wide range of subjects, from affirmative action to President Reagan's job performance. She has been quoted as saying she was "stunned" by these divergences, which suggest to her that "blacks are up for grabs politically." In view of the prominent place given this subject by the media, it is essential to scrutinize the Lichter study.

One major concern about her study is just who were the "leaders" she interviewed. Dr. Lichter says she interviewed 105 leaders from the NAACP, National Urban League, PUSH, Southern Christian Leadership Conference, National Conference of Black Mayors, and the Congressional Black Caucus, chosen, she says, from a list of "all those in executive positions as well as members of their boards of directors and trustees." Her interviewees, however, do not appear to be reasonably representative of the blacks who are perceived to be national leaders. The chief executive officers of the NAACP (Ben Hooks), National Urban League (John Jacob), the Congressional Black Caucus (Rep. Mickey Leland), and SCLC (Reverend Joseph Lowery) said they were not interviewed. Neither were such prominent national figures as Jesse Jackson, Coretta King, Vernon Jordan, Dorothy Height, Faye Bryant, and Mayor Ernest Morial. If those 10 leaders were not on a list of 105 interviewees, one wonders who is purporting to speak for black leaders in America and whether the Lichter survey is so skewed as to be suspect and misleading.

Another problem with her survey is its methodology. Respondents, asked a number of complex questions, were given only two choices from which to answer—and in some cases the choices do not even seem mutually exclusive. Moreover, one question purporting to show blacks' attitudes toward busing for school integration actually asked about busing "from one school district to another," a form of busing that is relatively infrequent and especially controversial.

These methodological problems probably account for many of the discrepancies between the Lichter survey and two other recent, extensively reported surveys of the black population that Dr. Lichter overlooks, one by the Joint Center and the Gallup Organization (see *Focus*, September 1984) and the other by Data Black, a New York opinion research firm. Both reported findings that differ sharply from those in the Lichter survey. For example, whereas Dr. Lichter found that 66 percent of blacks believe they are making progress, the JCPS/Gallup poll found that only 27 percent of blacks believe they have made progress in the past five years. Whereas Dr. Lichter found that 30 percent of blacks give President Reagan a favorable approval rating, the JCPS/Gallup poll found only an 8 percent approval rating. The findings in the Data Black poll contrast just as sharply with many of those reported by Lichter. Because it is highly unlikely that a dramatic shift in attitudes among blacks occurred in 1985, the extent of the discrepancies between the Lichter findings and the other surveys is puzzling, to say the least.

Clearly, much can be learned from surveys that seriously probe the attitudes of various segments of society and that shed light on differences between leaders and the masses they ostensibly lead. However, it is critical to distinguish between valid research efforts and those that are crippled by methodological flaws and tinged by political or ideological considerations.

Eddie N. Williams
President

FOCUS

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Winning Statewide Office

by Roland W. Burris

(The author has been comptroller of the state of Illinois since 1978 and is a vice chairman of the Democratic National Committee. He is one of three blacks currently holding statewide elective office in the United States.)

Since the 1960s, the roster of black elected officials has expanded dramatically. As JCPS has documented, between 1970 and 1985 the total has increased more than fourfold, going from 1,469 in 1970 to 6,056 in 1985. And yet, even a cursory count of the total number of elective offices in various units of government reveals that black elected officials constitute but a thin layer of electoral power. Further growth is essential if anything resembling proportional representation is to be achieved.

Perhaps nothing indicates the thinness of black representation more than the elected executive/administrative branch of state government. Indeed, in this area the numbers have declined during the past seven years.

Admittedly, the number of black officials elected on a statewide basis was never large. In fact, even at its largest the group would have been hard-pressed to fill a table of ten at a fund-raising banquet. In 1978, when I was first elected comptroller of Illinois, there were two black lieutenant governors, one secretary of state, one treasurer, one superintendent of public instruction, and Edward Brooke was ending his lonely tenure as the only black U.S. Senator. Today our ranks have dwindled to three, a number that would lead any conservationist to call us an endangered species.*

Therein lies both a challenge and an opportunity.

For several months now I have been going around the country calling attention to the fact that statewide elected office remains virtually virgin territory awaiting exploration by black political pioneers. However, in this as in any other pioneering venture, winning statewide legislative or executive office will not be easy. That is one lesson my Illinois experience has taught me. That same experience teaches me something else: *it's possible.*

Illinois, like most states in the nation, has a heterogeneous population with diverse, and often conflicting, needs and aspirations that the population expects its state government to serve. To secure votes, I had to persuade the Illinois electorate that, although I could not satisfy each of their individual expectations, I would work tirelessly to serve the common good.

"The common good" is sometimes sneered at as a cliche of American politics; it endures because, at best, it includes everybody and excludes no one. And when it is sincerely pursued, it becomes an objective around which most citizens can rally. It is the foundation upon which winning coalitions can be built.

For my election, a coalition—of blacks, Hispanics, Asians, and white ethnics; of urban, suburban, and rural residents; of young and old; of all income classes and every social stratum—came together and trusted me to fulfill my promise to be the best comptroller Illinois had ever had. They gave me the desired majority, making me the first black constitutional (executive) officer in Illinois history.

Of course, being a first does not guarantee getting an encore. Performance counts. My first term found me dedicated to enhancing the state's fiscal integrity and accountability, ensuring the state both a triple-A bond rating and a high level of citizen confidence.

And I made an earnest effort to keep in touch with the people—listening to their concerns and responding sensitively to their needs whenever possible.

In 1982, I sought re-election as demonstrably "the best comptroller Illinois ever had." Evidently the people agreed, for they re-elected me with the third highest vote total in state history and the largest plurality of any state candidate from any party.

On September 18, 1985, I announced my candidacy for attorney general of Illinois. This time I shall be running as the candidate with an established record of serving the best interests of all the people. As in the past, I have advised the electorate that "I shall cooperate with everyone but bow to no one." That posture has earned me a few enemies, but it has cost me few friends.

Inevitably, when a black candidate seeks election outside the comfortable confines of a predominantly black constituency, the question of race comes up. My race is a fact, but I have not allowed it to be a determining factor in my campaign strategy (even if others have tried to make it one, by innuendo if not overtly). Rather, I proceed on the basis that if whites can represent blacks and whites, as they have for centuries, a black can do the same with equal effect.

At the same time, I do not take the black vote for granted. I campaign as strenuously in a black ward as I do in other wards. I pay as careful attention to what black voters say to me as I do to what I hear from other voters.

Now, what about money? Certainly it is a critical element in every campaign, and its importance seems even greater as one reaches for higher office. Its role is undeniably influential but not necessarily decisive. Since I have never had the luxury of adequate finances, I have tried to overcome that disadvantage with a combination of hard work, innovative campaigning, and some personal loans.

Having said all that, I realize that there is no foolproof system for winning an election. Sometimes, despite our best efforts, we fail. That's a risk inherent in politics—another lesson experience has taught me. In 1984, I was one of four candidates in the Democratic primary for a seat in the U.S. Senate. I lost to Congressman Paul Simon, finding some comfort in the fact that I was the runner-up.

That loss left me neither ashamed nor bitter. In contrast, if I hadn't made the effort, I would have felt disgraced. History abounds with illustrations of pioneers who fell short of their ultimate objectives but who, by venturing forth, cleared a path for the next wave of explorers. Trail-blazing is an integral part of advancement, economically, socially, and politically.

The challenge is there, the opportunity is there, but black political aspirants must seize the moment. To paraphrase Frederick Douglass, neither power nor progress concedes anything to us that we do not demand and strive for.

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*In 1978, the lieutenant governors were Mervyn M. Dymally, California, and George Brown, Colorado. Richard H. Austin was secretary of state in Michigan, Henry E. Parker was treasurer in Connecticut, and Wilson C. Riles was superintendent of public instruction in California. In 1979, Vel Phillips became secretary of state in Wisconsin. Today, Austin, Parker, and myself are still in office.

Can RICO Stop Minority Business "Fronts"?

by Robert E. Suggs

(Mr. Suggs, a corporate attorney, is a senior research associate at the Joint Center.)

At all levels of government, black elected officials are exerting a great deal of effort to enact minority set-aside legislation. Set-asides require certain governmental entities to make a specified percentage of their purchases from firms owned and controlled by minorities or women. Because set-asides redirect existing procurement instead of calling for new expenditures, in these fiscally stringent times they are one of the few ways in which substantial resources can be devoted to increasing the business and employment opportunities available to minorities. Federal set-aside awards of prime contracts reportedly account for $4 billion, or approximately 10 percent of all minority business revenues. Federal set-asides of subcontracts and awards made under state and local programs may add another 5-10 percent.

The available evidence, however, indicates that set-aside programs are being abused to the extent that a significant share of the contracts (especially the federal contracts) awarded under set-asides may be going to "fronts" (firms that falsely represent themselves as owned and controlled by minorities or women). In a recent interview on national television, an official of the U.S. Department of Transportation estimated that as many as 30 or 40 percent of the minority firms in its set-aside program might be fronts. In a lawsuit brought by an Ohio minority business organization, a court found that 75-85 percent of the awards under a minority procurement program for railroads went to woman-owned firms, many of which had been organized by white male suppliers and put under the nominal ownership of wives or female relatives to take advantage of the program. During fiscal 1983 the Inspector General of the U.S. Department of Transporation audited 70 firms awarded $56 million in set-aside contracts in an eight-state region under the Surface Transportation Assistance Act. The audit found that 18 of the firms (25 percent) were not owned and controlled by minorities or women and another 16 had not presented sufficient evidence to resolve questions about their ownership. Thus, only slightly more than half the firms were clearly owned by minorities. In addition, a disproportionately large share of the total dollars awarded ($44 million out of $56 million) went to the ineligible and questionable firms.

Given the value of set-aside programs and the degree to which they are being abused, having the programs purged of fronts is an important objective for minorities. Abuses not only divert resources from minorities, who are the intended recipients, but they are also being used to discredit set-aside programs.

Public resources for purging the programs of fronts are lacking, and so is the governmental will. The federal government, in particular, is not likely to make a sustained effort to curb abuses in set-aside programs. The U.S. Department of Justice has taken the position that it lacks authority to stop fronts from participating in these programs, while at the same time it resists congressional efforts to provide specific authority by legislation. Moreover, the Assistant Attorney General for civil rights enforcement alleges that all set-asides are unconstitutional and should be abolished. Therefore, if set-asides are to be purged of fronts, private initiatives by legitimate minority firms that benefit from set-asides will be necessary.

One statute exists that not only provides strong incentives for private enforcement but may also be used to impose punitive sanctions on fronts: RICO—the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (18 USCA sections 1961-1968). Enacted in 1970 as a remedy against organized crime, RICO could become a powerful tool for minority firms to-use in eliminating fronts from set-aside procurement. Given the importance of set-asides to minority economic advancement, the possibilities offered by RICO are worth exploring.

Designed as a weapon to be used against organized crime and modeled on the antitrust laws to encourage enforcement by private firms and individuals, RICO provides both civil remedies and criminal penalties. A successful plaintiff in a civil lawsuit under RICO receives three times its actual damages plus actual (although reasonable) attorneys' fees. Criminal provisions not only impose fines and lengthy prison sentences, but also allow seizures and mandatory forfeitures of property.

The Justice Department virtually ignored RICO until 1975; today, however, in criminal cases against organized crime, it is the prosecutor's tool of preference. Private plaintiffs' lawyers did not discover RICO until 1979, and since then, several hundred RICO suits have been filed. But contrary to the expectations of the bill's authors, less than 10 percent of these suits involve either organized crime or the kinds of violent offenses associated with organized crime. The other 90 percent simply allege fraud in a commercial setting.

Some of the parties to RICO suits in commercial disputes have been among the nation's largest corporations. For example, IBM sued Hitachi under RICO, and the defendant settled for upward of $200 million. Another civil suit, one involving computer leasing fraud, was settled for $65 million.

How relevant is all this to minority firms that have lost contracts to fronts and receive no satisfactory response to their complaints? Potentially, very relevant. Normally, if a minority firm is the second lowest bidder and loses to a front, it has few effective legal remedies. It can, for example, sue for fraud to recover lost profits. Such a lawsuit was made possible by a federal court of appeals decision earlier this year (*Tectonics, Inc. of Florida* v. *Castle Const. Co.*) provided that state common law authorizes such a claim. But litigation is generally costly, and, except on large contracts, legal fees could well exceed the profits recovered. However, if RICO, with its civil remedy of triple damages and actual attorneys' fees, is a workable approach, its use could certainly prove advantageous to minority firms.

A person violates RICO by acquiring, controlling, or conducting an "enterprise" (defined very broadly and not restricted to a single corporate or business entity) by means of a pattern of racketeering activity. The statute defines racketeering activity as at least two violations, within a 10-year period, of certain state and federal criminal statutes ranging in coverage from arson to mail fraud. In a civil RICO suit, a plaintiff would allege that a pattern of criminal violations of the relevant state or federal statute had occurred.

(Continued on page 5)

**Joint Center
for
Political Studies**

JCPS Conference Report **Number 7, October 1985**

Black Politics After the 1984 Elections

On April 30, 1985, the Joint Center for Political Studies sponsored a conference on the 1984 presidential election and the future of black politics. Held at the Carnegie Endowment Conference Center in Washington, D.C., the conference featured scholars and political activists from across the nation. ***Milton Morris*** *and* ***Edwin Dorn,*** *the center's director and deputy director of research, respectively, co-chaired the conference, and* ***Linda F. Williams,*** *senior research associate at the center and a conference participant, prepared this account.*

Background

To understand the hopes with which black Americans approached the presidential election of 1984 and the frustrations they experienced as the votes were cast and counted, one needs to recall the political atmosphere of 1982. In 1982 black Americans believed, quite reasonably, that they would play a significant role in the 1984 presidential election. Unemployment, the federal deficit, and poverty rates were all at very high levels, and President Ronald Reagan's own budget director had admitted that the "greed of the wealthy" had grown completely "out of control."

But by 1984, much had changed. As the economy improved, so did Reagan's personal standing. Poll after poll predicted first a Reagan victory and then a Reagan landslide.

The polls were right. Reagan triumphed decisively over his Democratic opponent, Walter Mondale, and he did so despite a very impressive political mobilization of blacks against him. For the first time, the black-white gap in registration shrank to only 3.3 percentage points (in 1980 it had been 8.4 percentage points), and the voter registration rate among black women was even higher than that among white men. The black-white gap in voter turnout also narrowed dramatically, going from 10.4 percentage points in 1980 to 5.6 percentage points in 1984.

These were significant achievements; yet black hopes of playing a decisive role in the presidential election were not fulfilled. Not only did the presidential candidate supported by 90 percent of blacks go down to overwhelming defeat, but the Congressional Black Caucus lost one member (as the total number of blacks in the U.S. House of Representatives dropped from 21 to 20), and the number of black state legislators increased merely by 7 (in the 1982 elections it had increased by 45). Only at the local level did black political candidates make significant gains: 350 additional blacks were elected to local office.

Although the results of the elections of 1984 are clear, the meaning for blacks is clouded. To examine the significance of the elections for black Americans, the Joint Center invited political analysts from across the nation to a one-day conference to explore four subjects: the voting behavior and political attitudes of blacks

T. CAVANAGH
H. WALTON
R. STARKS
W

Left to right: James Jackson, Robert Holmes, Gracia Hillman, Thomas Cavanagh, Hanes Walton, Robert Starks

Left to right: Lucius Barker, C. Vernon Gray

and whites in 1984; the purposes, limitations, and achievements of Jesse Jackson's campaign; the political challenges facing black Americans in the second half of this decade; and strategies for black politics in the immediate future.

Voting Behavior and Political Attitudes

The primary and general elections of 1984 vividly demonstrated enormous differences between the voting behavior of blacks and that of whites. Jesse Jackson won 77 percent of the black vote in the Democratic primaries but only 5 percent of the white vote; Gary Hart won 43 percent of the white vote, yet only 3 percent of the black vote. The one candidate able to attract more than a small percentage of both white and black Democratic voters, Walter Mondale, received 19 percent of the black vote and 42 percent of the white vote in the primaries. In the general election, however, he won the black vote overwhelmingly, whereas Reagan won the white vote (and especially the white Southern vote) overwhelmingly. Clearly, blacks and whites supported different candidates in 1984.

To explain those differences, **Thomas Cavanagh,** at that time a senior research associate at the Joint Center and now on the staff of the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences, made use of data from a JCPS/Gallup poll of black and white populations. The findings of the poll, Cavanagh pointed out, revealed that the differences between blacks and whites in voting behavior stemmed from starkly divergent evaluations of the state of the nation, of the state of race relations, and of several economic and political issues.

For example, whereas almost half the whites polled in the survey (48 percent) were satisfied with "the way things [were] going" in the United States, only a small minority of blacks (14 percent) were satisfied. Whereas more than two out of every five whites (46 percent) said they were better off financially than they had been four years earlier, more than two out of every five blacks (43 percent) felt they were worse off. Whereas only 4 percent of whites felt the situation of blacks had worsened in the preceding five years, 30 percent of blacks felt their situation had worsened. Asked to name the three most important issues in the presidential campaign, blacks gave highest priority to unemployment (65 percent), government programs to aid the poor (45 percent), and civil rights (38 percent). Whites, however, divided almost evenly among unemployment (42 percent), the federal deficit (42 percent), and inflation (40 percent). Whites approved of Reagan's job performance by 57 to 32 percent; blacks disapproved by 73 to 23 percent. Whites heavily considered Reagan better at getting things done and being a strong leader; blacks almost as heavily considered Mondale harder working and a stronger leader. Cavanagh concluded that such gaps in perception could lead one to wonder whether blacks and whites were even following the same campaign and reacting to the same candidates.

Jesse Jackson's Campaign

In no respect did black and white voters differ from each other more than in support for Jesse Jackson. Among conference participants, too, Jesse Jackson's candidacy generated the greatest amount of disagreement. Participants debated the purposes of the campaign, as well as its limitations and achievements.

On the one hand, for **Lorn Foster,** professor of government at Pomona College, **Robert Smith,** professor of political science at Howard University, **William Crotty,** professor of political science at Northwestern University, and others, the Jackson campaign was a social movement rather than a race for the presidential nomination. According to Foster, blacks who voted for Jackson did so to challenge the social order and established leadership, black and white. Smith held that the campaign represented a new beginning for blacks, much as Montgomery (Alabama) represented a beginning for the civil rights movement. Crotty argued, moreover, that as a social movement, the Jackson campaign was exceptionally successful, given the numerous handicaps it faced: it was poorly funded; was opposed not only by white leaders of the Democratic party but also by many black leaders; was portrayed unfairly by the media; and was run by a staff that was, at best, inexperienced. Yet, Crotty pointed out, despite those difficulties Jackson mobilized black voters; disproportionately attracted young, educated, and Southern black voters; did better than most would have predicted in the primaries (winning 19 percent of the popular vote and the votes of more than 400 delegates to the Democratic National Convention); and spoke to his constituency's concerns (especially those involving the third world, in particular South Africa and the Caribbean countries) in a way that forced other candidates to address the same questions.

On the other hand, **Martin Kilson,** professor of government at Harvard University, **Roger Wilkins,** senior fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies, and **Adolph Reed, Jr.,** professor of political science at Yale University, saw the Jackson campaign as a race for the presidential nomination. And, Reed held, in those terms the campaign failed to meet any of the objectives claimed for it by its managers. The campaign, he said, exposed Americans to few new issues; did not represent the poor black masses as opposed to entrenched black elites; could not be credited with single-handedly increasing black voter registration and turnout, since those figures were rising long before the campaign began; had little, if any, coattail effect in getting other blacks elected; and, because of the "crusade" hype surrounding it, tended to inhibit rational political discourse by attempting to force all blacks to support Jackson or be stigmatized as traitors to their race. In short, from Reed's viewpoint Jackson achieved little.

All participants, however, agreed that whatever the Jackson campaign may have represented and achieved, it failed to build a multi-ethnic "rainbow coalition." Although Jackson received about 806,000 votes from non-blacks, a potent multi-ethnic coalition simply did not emerge. Most conference participants agreed that the principal barriers to Jackson's coalition-building were Jackson's race, the racism and conservative orientation of many white Americans, and the media's handling of his campaign. Yet, according to **Lucius Barker,** professor of political science at Washington University, Jackson's presidential campaign may have planted the seeds of a progressive, multi-ethnic, multi-racial coalition.

After 1984: Challenges Facing Black Americans

Most of the conference participants agreed that black Americans face five major difficulties in the present political climate: (1) gaining substantial power within the Democratic party and influencing the party to promote more actively the interests of minority Americans; (2) encouraging the Republican party to seek black votes by supporting programs important to black Americans and by running black candidates for elective office; (3) halting the growing conservative trend in public policies and priorities; (4) preventing black voter registration and turnout from declining in reaction to the 1984 election results; and (5) strengthening the unity of black political leadership.

Robert Holmes, professor of political science at Atlanta University and a Georgia state legislator, believed that, at best, the Democratic party was still taking black votes for granted and, at worst, might be abandoning the concerns of black Americans and moving to the right to shed its image as a party of "special interests."

He also believed that Republicans were still writing off black votes and would probably continue to ignore issues important to blacks, since in the past two presidential elections they had proved that they could win without black support. Cavanagh disagreed, claiming that the Republicans, in their attempt to become the majority party, would seek to attract black voters.

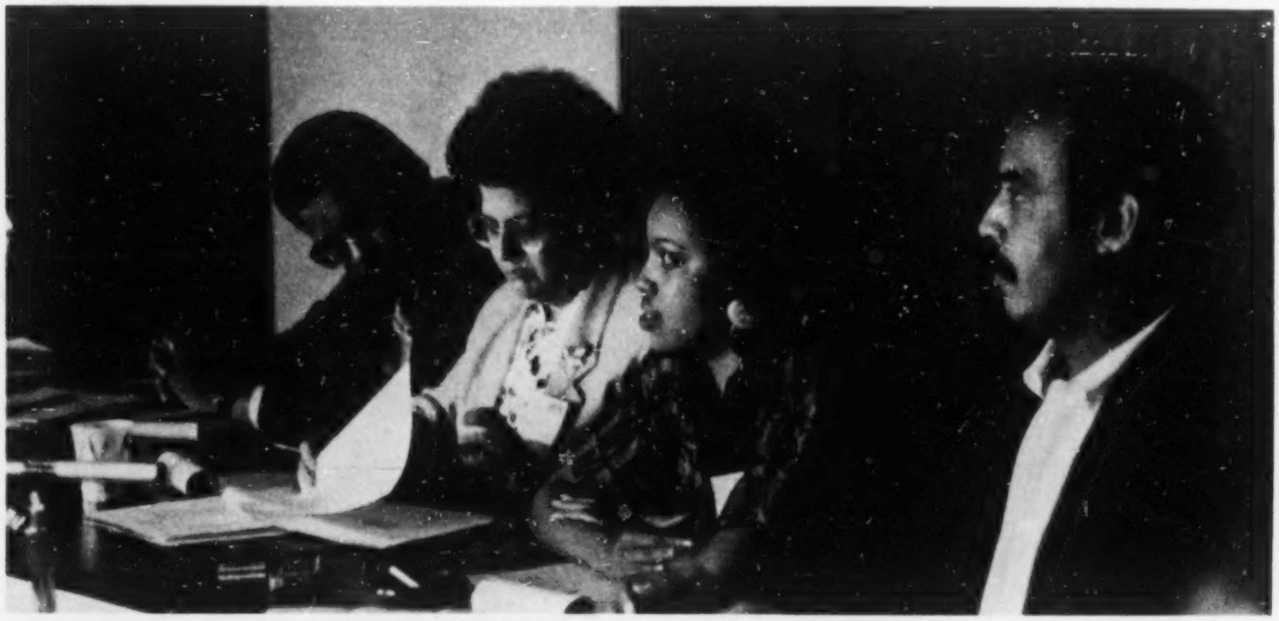
George Dalley, counsel and staff director of Congressman Charles Rangel's office and formerly a senior campaign aide to Vice President Mondale, pointed out that one of the most important challenges to black Americans in the mid-1980s was the increasing conservatism of American public policy. In Reagan's first term, liberal programs and priorities had been cut back and reversed. The number of equal employment opportunity lawsuits filed had decreased, and strict enforcement of civil rights and voting rights regulations had not been pursued. After four more years in office, the Reagan administration would have appointed to lifetime terms more than 150 federal judges, possibly including a majority of the justices of the U.S. Supreme Court. In this climate, Dalley argued, voting rights laws and affirmative action goals and timetables were facing—and would continue to face—repeated challenges.

Dalley also said that blacks (especially young blacks) might become disillusioned with electoral politics in reaction against the limited achievements of the Jackson campaign, the Democratic party's apparently diminishing concern with the issues that are important to blacks, and the increasing influence of conservatives. The way to ward off such disillusionment, he believed, was for blacks to work together regardless of whom they supported in the 1984 primary elections.

Possible Strategies for Black Politics

The participants did not endorse any single strategy for black politics but discussed two possible approaches: maximizing the leverage of blacks within the Democratic party and bargaining with both major parties. They also discussed the role of the government and of private individuals and groups in resolving the economic difficulties of poor black and white Americans.

Dalley believed that instead of abandoning the Democratic party at this time, blacks should try to maximize their strength within the party by demanding more power and more leadership positions. Cavanagh added that blacks should take a two-pronged approach to the Democratic party, adopting a more independent stance within the party as well as fielding independent candidacies where local conditions warranted.



Left to right: Michael Frazier, Eleanor Farrar, Linda Williams, Adolph Reed, Jr.

Cavanagh also suggested, however, that blacks should position themselves to bargain with both parties. He predicted that since Reagan would not be running in 1988 and none of the potential Republican contenders had Reagan's personal popularity among whites or generated the same degree of antipathy among blacks, blacks would be better placed to bargain with both major parties.

In comparing the probable impact of a stronger government role with the probable impact of additional self-help initiatives, the conference participants were divided in their preferences. Robert Smith did not believe that economic development should be approached in terms of self-help; he argued that black Americans at the lowest rung of the socioeconomic ladder could make no substantial progress without significant government intervention. Viewing the "self-help" philosophy as an acceptance of Reaganomics, he held that blacks had always helped themselves but that, as taxpayers and citizens, they had a right to expect a government responsive to their needs, and he expected the self-help approach to be short-lived. In contrast, Robert Holmes saw a need to place more stress on black economic self-development and argued that doing so would be a change for the better, since the current political strategies of blacks were not very productive.

Conclusion

The future that looked so promising to blacks in 1982—the possibility that they would play a pivotal role in the next presidential election—clearly did not materialize. Most conference participants, however, were optimistic, believing that the enormous increases in black voter registration and turnout and the impressive gains in the election of blacks to local office were laying the groundwork for important political advances. Thus, probably the most significant recommendation of the conference was that black leaders and black groups should continue to register the unregistered, fight for full enforcement of the Voting Rights Act, and recruit young blacks, both male and female, to run for public office.

List of Participants

Chris Arterton, Yale University
Lucius Barker, Washington University
Robert Bates, Jr., Mobil Oil Corporation
C. Anthony Broh, Princeton University
Ron Brown, University of Michigan
Thomas Cavanagh, National Academy of Sciences
William Crotty, Northwestern University
George Dalley, Congressman Charles Rangel's Office
Edwin Dorn, Joint Center for Political Studies
Eleanor Farrar, Joint Center for Political Studies
Lorn Foster, Pomona College
Michael Frazier, Fund for a Democratic Majority
C. Vernon Gray, Morgan State University
Gracia Hillman, National Coalition on Black Voter Participation
Robert Holmes, Atlanta University
James Jackson, University of Michigan
Martin Kilson, Harvard University
Leslie McLemore, Jackson State University
Milton D. Morris, Joint Center for Political Studies
Michael B. Preston, University of Illinois-Urbana
Adolph Reed, Jr., Yale University
Robert Smith, Howard University
Robert Starks, Northeastern Illinois University
Hanes Walton, Savannah State College
Roger Wilkins, Institute for Policy Studies
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Left to right: C. Anthony Broh, Roger Wilkins, Milton Morris, Chris Arterton

In a RICO suit against a minority front firm that had won a minority set-aside contract, the criminal violation that could most easily be shown is mail fraud. Mail fraud is a federal offense arising from use of the mail in commission of a fraud, and it applies, among other things, to the kind of deliberate misrepresentation of ownership and control that is found with minority fronts. To establish the racketeering pattern, the second-lowest-bidder minority firm has only to establish that at least two acts of mail fraud within the preceding 10 years did, in fact, occur. According to a recent ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court, the plaintiff does not have to prove that the defendant was actually convicted of the violation. For the final element to be shown in such a suit—injury to the plaintiff—the plaintiff must show that, but for the fraud, the plaintiff would have received a contract that was awarded, instead, to the front.

These essential elements of bringing suit under RICO will be present in many front situations. Bidding procedures usually involve use of the mail, and even a lax minority business certification program will require applicant firms, as a condition of eligibility, to claim they are minority-owned and minority-controlled—claims that, if proved deliberately false, would be fraudulent. Moreover, key documents needed to prove RICO violations (bid documents, certifications filed to claim minority status, articles of incorporation, etc.) offer the practical advantage of being in government files, beyond a defendant's control.

In most cases, the requirement of a previous violation is easily met. Audits that have unearthed fronts often show that the same front has been awarded several contracts; and even if a separate front has been organized for each contract, the majority-owned firm or individual that sponsored the fronts would still be the potential defendant with the deepest pocket. By giving evidence that the same sponsor had used either the same front or a different one in previous attempts to obtain a contract, a plaintiff could show the requisite previous offense.

The plaintiff would then have to show the extent of its injury. Lost profits would probably be the best measure, so the plaintiff's claim for damages would be for three times the profits it lost because of the fraud.

When fronts participate in set-aside programs with the acquiescence or connivance of public officials, or when public administrators and local governments have deliberately refused to tighten up lax eligibility and certification procedures, the officials or their governments may also be added to the suit as defendants.

More than 20 states have "little RICO" statutes (and at least half-a-dozen more have legislation pending), and most provide an independent basis for private enforcement in state courts. Those statutes, like the federal RICO, authorize both civil suits by private firms and criminal proceedings by local prosecutors.

Some "little RICO" statutes have less to offer in terms of potential recoveries for private litigants in civil suits than the federal RICO, and some have considerably more. Nearly all allow coordination with the local prosecutors who are responsible for law enforcement in the jurisdiction with the set-aside program. State criminal penalties vary in the fines and prison sentences they impose; some state statutes authorize the seizure of property and assets used in the RICO enterprise and their forfeiture to the state. In the context of a construction company sponsoring a front, for example, the property forfeited would include the proceeds of the fraudulently obtained contract as well as the controlling person's ownership interest in the sponsoring firm and in the front.

RICO, in offering the prospect of criminal enforcement by state and local prosecutors and the incentive of treble damages and attorneys' fees for private enforcement, may well provide minority firms with the tool they need for eliminating fronts from set-aside procurement.

Editor's Note: Written inquiries about this approach to the problem of fronts in set-aside programs may be addressed to Mr. Suggs at the Joint Center for Political Studies.

NBCSL Conference Slated for December 3-8

The National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL) will hold its Ninth Annual National Conference December 3 through 8, 1985, at the Hershey Hotel in Philadelphia.

According to NBCSL president Maryland State Senator Clarence M. Mitchell, III, "We anticipate a very active and highly visible conference in Philadelphia, including attendance by minority businesses, corporate representatives, nonprofit organizations, professional associations, and community groups, as well as our nationwide membership of state lawmakers."

Founded in 1977, the NBCSL has a membership comprising 390 state elected officials representing 42 states. The Caucus serves as a national network for the exchange of legislation, the sharing of expertise, and the formulation of policy strategies affecting the legislators' combined constituencies of over 26 million voters.

For more information about the upcoming conference, call (717) 787-3181.

NBC/LEO Meeting Set for December 7

The National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials (NBC/LEO) is holding its annual meeting on Saturday, December 7, 1985, in Seattle, Washington. For more information call Alice Thompson at (202) 626-3510.

Who Cares About the Black Aged?

by Richard H. Mapp

(Mr. Mapp is a vice president of the National Caucus and Center on Black Aged, Inc., in Washington, D.C.)

The American population is aging. Whereas in 1980 11 percent of the total population was 65 years of age and older, by July 1984 the figure had risen to 12 percent, and the U.S. Census Bureau expected that trend to continue at least until 1993.

For many people, and especially blacks, old age is accompanied by a decline in living standards. Consider these facts:

- black elderly Americans are nearly three times as likely to live in poverty as white elderly Americans; and 57 percent of black elderly Americans have no income except Social Security and Supplemental Security Income benefits;*
- black elderly Americans are nearly three times as likely to be unemployed as their white counterparts;
- 58 percent of the black elderly own their own homes, compared with 72 percent of the white elderly; and
- in comparison with white elderly households, black elderly households are 4 times as likely to lack complete kitchen facilities, 3½ times as likely to lack plumbing, 3½ times as likely to lack telephones, 2½ times as likely to have no central heat, and 2 times as likely to have no automobile.

The National Caucus and Center on Black Aged, Inc. (NCBA), has developed policy recommendations to respond to these problems. They focus on income, employment, health, long-term care, housing, crime, supportive and nutrition services, and education, research, and training.

Income. The main problem confronting elderly blacks today (especially elderly black women) is inadequate income in retirement. In 1983, 36.3 percent of all blacks 65 or older (but 41.7 percent of black women in the same age group) lived below the poverty line (had an annual income under $4,775 for an individual, $6,023 for a couple). The comparable figure for all elderly whites was 12.0 percent. Annual incomes under $10,000 were reported for 76.1 percent of elderly black males and 93.1 percent of elderly black females.

Social Security benefits account for 62 percent of the income received by elderly blacks, and Supplemental Security Income accounts for 11 percent.

NCBA's 1985 policy recommendations concern Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits. For Social Security, NCBA recommends that (a) Congress neither cap nor freeze cost-of-living adjustments; (b) a special consumer price index be established to measure better the impact of inflation upon the beneficiaries of Social Security and SSI; (c) the age of eligibility for full benefits revert from 67 to 65 because blacks and other minorities have a shorter life expectancy than whites; and (d) the Social Security Administration ensure that those entitled to SSI benefits actually receive them.

For SSI, NCBA recommends that (a) income standards be raised above the poverty line so that blind or disabled aged persons can have enough income for daily living expenses; and (b) recipients of SSI be allowed to live in the household of another person, receiving maintenance and support, without a reduction in SSI benefits (in other words, children should not be discouraged from helping parents or grandparents).

Employment. In 1983, the unemployment rate for blacks 65 or older was 9.3 percent; for whites, 3.2 percent. To maximize job opportunities for older black workers, NCBA recommends (a) greater funding for the Title V Senior Community Service Employment Program; (b) enforcement of the Age Discrimination in Employment Act; (c) abolition of mandatory retirement; (d) liberalization of the earnings limitation as a condition for receipt of Social Security benefits; and (e) repeal of the two-stage reduction in the Title V administrative cap.

Health. All barometers indicate that the health of elderly blacks is worse than that of elderly whites. The most pertinent statistics are those for life expectancy. Black males born in 1982 had a life expectancy of 64.9 years; white males, 71.5 years; black females, 73.5 years; and white females, 78.8 years. Moreover, the health-care system in the United States makes preventive medicine and quality care available to those in the middle class but provides only institutional care to low-income persons. And the protections of Medicare and Medicaid, so vital to all elderly Americans, have been whittled down in recent years.

NCBA recommends (a) resisting further cutbacks in both Medicare and Medicaid protection and strengthening the financing of both programs by controlling providers' costs; (b) capping out-of-pocket payments for hospital and medical services under Medicare until a universal, comprehensive national health insurance program with built-in cost controls is enacted; (c) keeping the age of eligibility for Medicare at 65; (d) promoting use of preventive health measures and encouraging development of alternatives to institutional care; (e) targeting funding for the National Institutes of Health at diseases that especially affect the elderly and minorities; and (f) establishing a National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases.

Long-Term Care. "Long-term care" refers to a wide range of services (in both institutional and noninstitutional settings) for people with chronic ailments. The country's health-care system has a built-in bias toward institutionalization, but home care should be emphasized much more than it has been up to now. Moreover, institutions that offer long-term care have tended to underserve elderly blacks, partly because of the institutions' high costs and discrimination and partly because many elderly blacks look on nursing homes with suspicion.

NCBA recommends the following: (a) national health policies should recognize that the family is the largest provider of long-term care for elderly blacks; (b) state agencies should strengthen their ombudsman programs for nursing homes; (c) the administration of drugs in nursing homes should be better regulated; (d) civil rights legislation on the accessibility of long-term care should be enforced; and (e) the Geriatric Research, Education, and Train-

(Continued on page 8)

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*Supplemental Security Income guarantees the income of the blind or disabled low-income elderly to a level approaching the official poverty level.

JCPS Announces Its Second Annual Distinguished Scholars Competition

The Joint Center now welcomes applications for its second annual Distinguished Scholars competition. The program, funded by a grant from the MacArthur Foundation, enables outstanding scholars and public policy analysts to spend up to one year in residence at the Joint Center in Washington, D.C., conducting research on issues of fundamental importance to black Americans. A maximum stipend of $60,000 will be given to the scholar selected for the 1986-87 program year.

The scholar selected for the 1985-86 program year was Frank R. Parker, director of the Voting Rights Project at the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law. He is spending his fellowship year writing a book on the political and social history of Mississippi from 1965 to 1980, with emphasis on the increase in black political participation. Parker describes his time at the center as "an extremely valuable experience, giving me the chance to do the kind of research I've wanted to do for 15 years."

The scholar selected will have great flexibility in planning a program of activities for the fellowship year. She/he will be expected to complete at least one major piece of publishable research on a topic of mutual interest to the scholar and the Joint Center. The scholar also will participate, as appropriate, in the Joint Center's on-going activities.

Applicants should have a record of substantial publication and distinguished work in their field. Special consideration is given to applicants whose research interests coincide with those of the Joint Center.

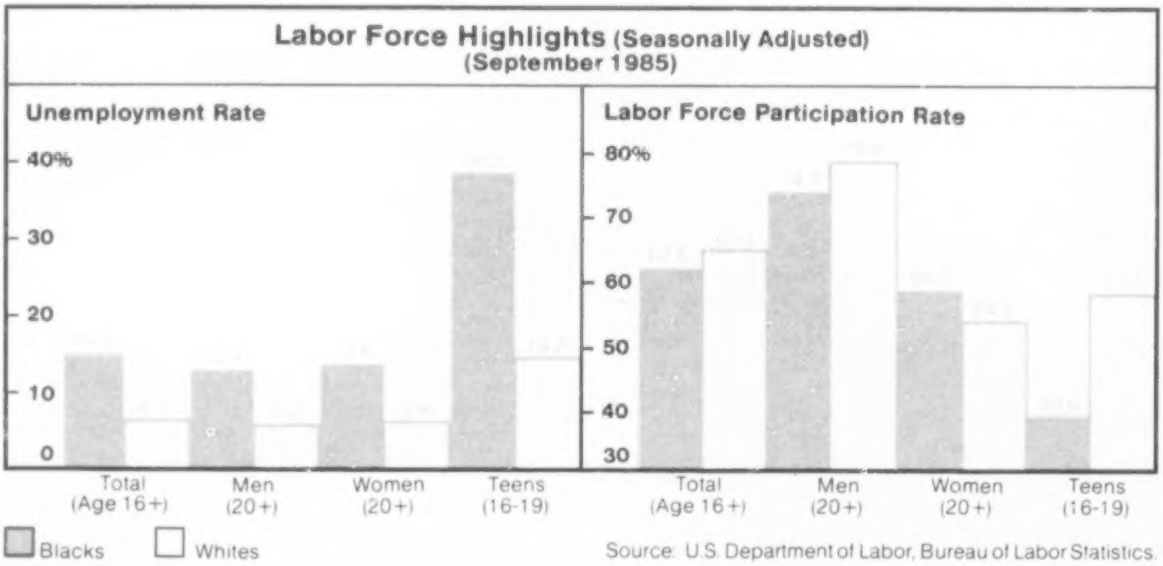
Applicants for the 1986-87 program year should submit a curriculum vitae and a statement of no more than 2,500 words describing the project to be completed during their stay at the Joint Center and the relationship between their interests and the Joint Center's work. Applicants should arrange to have two letters of support for the project sent to the Joint Center, indicating the candidate's ability to complete the work successfully. Applications must be postmarked no later than January 5, 1986. Finalists must be available for an interview in Washington, D.C., early in January. The award will be announced by January 30, 1986.

For further information, please write to Dr. Milton D. Morris, Distinguished Scholars Program, Joint Center for Political Studies, 1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Suite 400, Washington, D.C. 20004; or call (202)626-3562.

Labor Force Highlights

Presented below are the unemployment and labor force participation rates of blacks and whites, by age and sex, for September 1985. The unemployment rate measures the percentage of the labor force that is unemployed. The labor force participation rate measures the percentage of the total noninstitutionalized population that is employed or seeking work. The figures have been "seasonally adjusted"—that is, the changes in these indices that result from seasonal events have been factored out.

The labor force statistics for August showed declining unemployment rates for blacks. That trend did not continue into September. The overall unemployment rate for blacks rose by 1.3 percent in September; at 15.3 percent, it was 0.3 percent higher than it had been before the August decline. Hardest hit were males and teenagers. For whites, in contrast, the unemployment rates declined, except for adult women. Since the labor force participation rates for both races increased, apparently new white entrants were absorbed into the labor market more easily than new black entrants were.


Labor Force Highlights (Seasonally Adjusted)
(September 1985)

Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

. . . Black Aged?

(Continued from page 6)

ing Act should include special provisions that promote the training of black health-care professionals.

Housing. Housing is the main expenditure for the elderly and, at the same time, perhaps the most visible sign of their deprivation: 13.5 percent of the houses in which elderly blacks live are without central heat, and elderly blacks are 3½ times as likely as elderly whites to lack plumbing for their exclusive use.

NCBA recommends the following: (a) Congress should retain funding for new housing construction, housing rehabilitation, and other housing assistance and should enact into law the 1985 Housing Act (H.R. 1); (b) Section 202 housing (housing for the elderly and handicapped) should be continued; (c) the congregate housing services program should be made more than a demonstration program; (d) the Title V Senior Community Service Employment Program should focus increased attention on home repairs; (e) the cap on rents for tenants in federally assisted housing should be reduced by 5 percent; and (f) Congress should prohibit the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) from requiring competitive bidding for section 202 projects; should bar HUD from significantly lowering the current section 202 per unit cost limitations; should prevent HUD from requiring more than 25 percent of section 202 units to be efficiencies; should cap section 202 loans at an interest rate of 9.25 percent; and should prevent HUD from requiring a minimum capital investment exceeding $10,000 for section 202 proposals.

Crime. Freedom from fear is one of the greatest needs of elderly blacks, who are much more likely to be victims of crime than are elderly whites. Afraid to venture out into crime-ridden neighborhoods and lacking the resources to move to a safer neighborhood, many elderly blacks live under a form of house arrest. They may also be reluctant to report crimes, fearing retaliation and having no confidence in the criminal justice system.

NCBA recommends that (a) efforts to combat crime focus on prevention; (b) community crime-prevention services be coordinated with a wide range of other services to ensure a more comprehensive approach that reduces crime and helps victims; (c) the local community be involved; (d) strong and effective handgun control laws be enacted; and (e) the U.S. Civil Rights Commission investigate hate groups that encourage violence against elderly blacks and other minorities.

Supportive and Nutrition Services. Older Americans with transportation at their disposal have a much easier time facing the challenges posed by advancing age, but many older Americans find public transportation unavailable, inaccessible, or too costly. Although the Older Americans Act has helped deliver a wide range of services for the aged—not transportation only, but also congregate meals, home-delivered meals, outreach, information, and referral—the recent report of the Civil Rights Commission emphasized that the need to serve aged minorities more effectively and more equitably still exists.

NCBA recommends (a) full enforcement of the 1984 amendments to the Older Americans Act; (b) a three-year extension of the Legal Services Corporation; (c) passage of the 1985 Food Stamp and Commodity Distribution Improvement Act; and (d) enactment of the 1985 Civil Rights Restoration Act.

Education, Research, and Training. The need for these activities is surely obvious. NCBA recommends (a) increased funding for the Older Americans Act Title IV; (b) initiatives to serve elderly minorities more effectively; (c) additional research on the shorter life expectancy of minorities; and (d) passage of the Geriatric Research, Education, and Training Act.

Clearly, the problems of America's black elderly need more attention from organizations like NCBA, from government, and from individuals. Our elderly are a precious human resource, and we all have a stake in their well-being.

Editor's Note: For more information on the black elderly, write to the National Caucus and Center on Black Aged, Inc., 1424 K St., N.W. (Suite 500), Washington, D.C. 20005.

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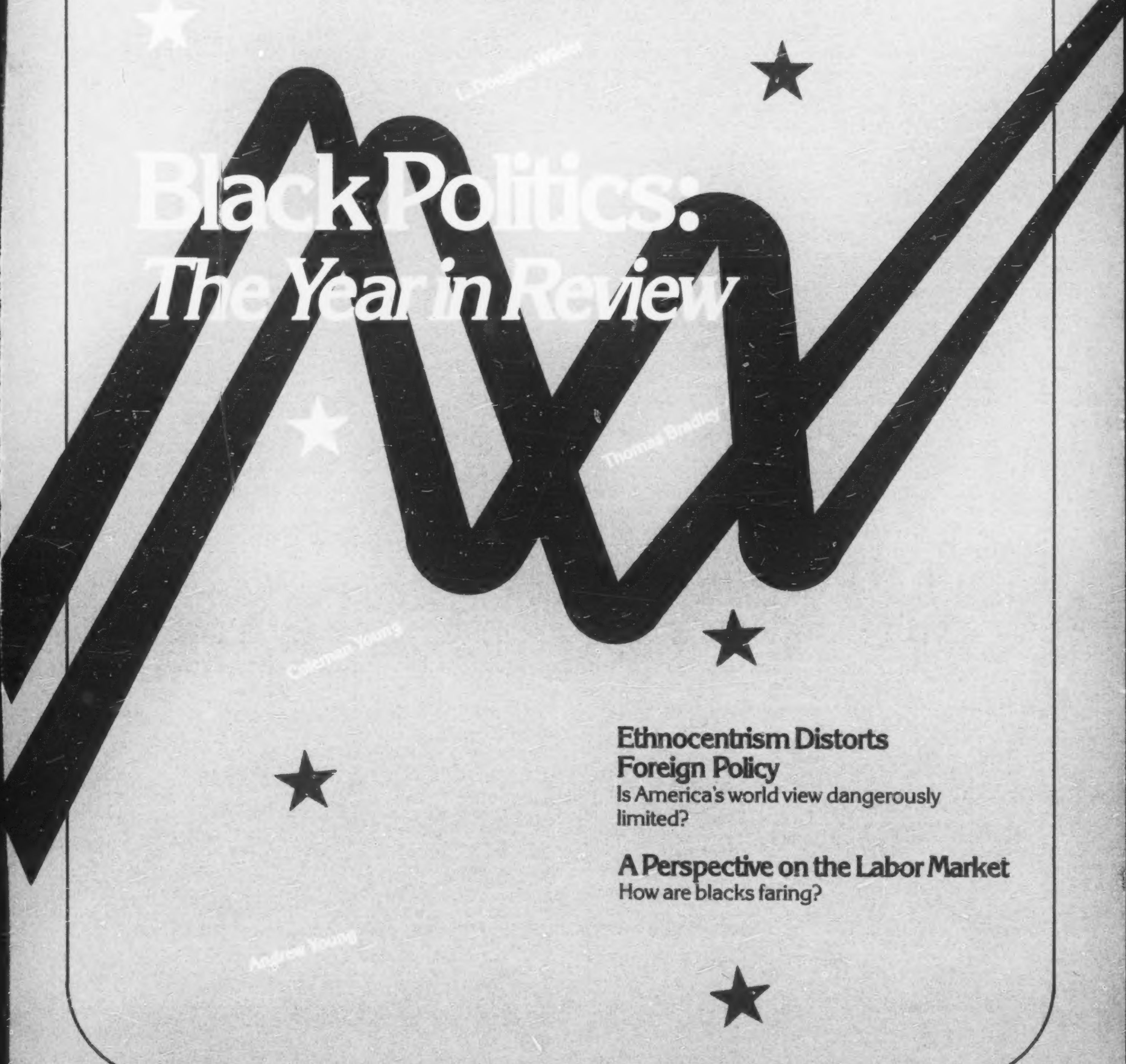
Index to Focus,
Volume 13, 1985

Black Politics:
The Year in Review


L. Douglas Wilder
Thomas Bradley
Coleman Young
Andrew Young

Ethnocentrism Distorts Foreign Policy

Is America's world view dangerously limited?

A Perspective on the Labor Market

How are blacks faring?

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Perspective

The stunning victory of Virginia's new lieutenant-governor-elect, Democrat L. Douglas Wilder, in the November 5th elections contains a number of notable lessons for blacks, the Democratic party, and the nation.

For the nation and blacks, Wilder's election can be viewed as a clear barometer of progress. The first black elected to statewide office in Virginia since Reconstruction, he represents a shattering of Virginia's old image as the "capital" of the Jim Crow South. Virginia voters, in electing Wilder by a 52 percent majority, obviously made their choice based on his excellent leadership record while serving as a state senator for the last 16 years. Although race remained a factor, it was only a secondary factor—a fact which speaks well of both Doug Wilder and the Virginia electorate. In fact, Wilder's own personal refusal to position himself as a symbolic black candidate was the cornerstone of a brilliant campaign strategy that was at once bold and low-key.

Perhaps the most striking aspect of his campaign was the early decision to have him meet thousands of mostly-white Virginia voters face to face during a 95-county, 300-city tour through the state. This bold move was counterbalanced by the low-key, issues-oriented message he delivered and the support he generated from some of the state's more conservative Democratic leaders such as House Speaker A.L. Philpott; from the Fraternal Order of Police; from moderates like Governor Charles Robb; and from the state's liberal leaders. As Wilder's campaign manager, Paul Goldman, concluded, Wilder's strategy was to make voters ask, "Why *not* vote for Wilder," rather than "Why should I vote for Wilder." Thus, Wilder persistently emphasized his qualifications and experience for the office of lieutenant governor.

Wilder did not campaign aggressively among blacks, preferring to gain recognition and support in areas where he was least known. Instead, he sent surrogates to campaign in black precincts. The strategy paid off. He won 97 percent of the black vote and 46 percent of the white vote. His largest percentages of the white vote came from areas with very small black populations—e.g., northern Virginia, where the population is approximately 16 percent black, and southwest Virginia (Appalachia), where the population is only 2 percent black.

As for the Demcratic Party, well, obviously it is alive and kicking in Virginia, despite the dire predictions of the doubting Thomases when Wilder won the Democratic nomination. Many people attribute the Democratic sweep in Virginia (Gerald Baliles for governor, Mary Sue Terry for attorney general, and Wilder for lieutenant governor) to the overwhelming popularity and persuasiveness of outgoing Virginia Governor Charles Robb.

Robb is now being touted as a national leader within the Democratic Party and as a possible candidate for president or vice president in 1988.

But at least as far as Wilder is concerned, credit also should go to the brilliant campaign he and his campaign manager waged, to fairminded Virginia voters, and to the ineptness of his opponent.

One down-side of the Wilder victory is that it was achieved with a black voter turnout that was lower than in the gubernatorial election of 1981. Virginia's black voting-age population makes up 18 percent of the total electorate in the state. Yet, despite the presence of Wilder on the ticket, black turnout in the election is estimated to have been as low as 12 percent of the total vote—down from 15 percent in 1981.

The challenge for black electoral politics in the late 1980s is to produce more victories at all levels of government, but especially at the state level. Wilder demonstrated that this is possible where a candidate is well qualified and runs a very sophisticated campaign. But to build on Wilder's victory in other places and for other offices, blacks must exercise their right to vote more fully. They must also get more involved in political parties and campaigns and in the central political debates of the day. And blacks should encourage friends, family, and colleagues to register and vote. It is still all too easy to lose elections by succumbing to apathy. Political power is amassed by registering and voting and by passing the word to others to do the same.

Eddie N. Williams
President

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Black Politics: The Year in Review

by Linda F. Williams

(The author is a senior research associate at the Joint Center.)

In 1985, black political candidates won some striking victories, and the black vote was decisive in some elections. In other elections, although the black vote was not decisive, it was noteworthy. Taken as a whole, the elections gave no reason for one to believe that massive shifts in abiding party loyalties were occurring, especially among blacks.

Looking ahead to 1986, on several grounds it seems that the Republicans may lose their majority in the Senate and that more blacks may be elected to the House of Representatives than in any previous year.

The Success of Black Candidates

In the 1985 elections, black candidates for public office had mixed political fortunes, with some candidates winning and some losing. As a whole, however, they made progress: more than 300 blacks were either reelected or newly elected to public office.

The biggest breakthrough came with the election of Democratic State Senator L. Douglas Wilder as Virginia's lieutenant governor (see page 2 of this issue of *Focus*). Other important victories included the reelection of black mayors in three of the nation's largest cities (Democrats Thomas Bradley in Los Angeles, Andrew Young in Atlanta, and Coleman Young in Detroit). Black mayors were also reelected in several medium-sized cities, including Charlotte, North Carolina, and Hartford, Connecticut, where Harvey Gantt and Thirman L. Milner, respectively, defeated their Republican challengers.

The reelections of all these black mayors reflects the growing advantage of incumbency. In the 1960s and early 1970s, most big-city mayors failed to be reelected for second terms, but today mayors often serve more than one term.

Where blacks were newly elected to office, they tended to win open seats; for example, New York City Clerk David Dinkins was elected to the open seat for Manhattan borough president, and Ron Sims of King County (Seattle), Washington, was elected to an open seat as a county councilman in that state (the first black to hold the position). Where blacks were challenging incumbents, they tended to be defeated. For example, George Arthur in Buffalo, Herman Farrell in New York, and Norman Rice in Seattle all lost to incumbent mayors.

The Black Vote

Behind the general success of black candidates in 1985 was the continued cohesiveness of the black vote. In some places, however, black voter turnout was not as high as had been expected. In the New York City primary, for example, only 38 percent of black registered voters went to the polls, despite the presence of many black candidates on the ballot. And in Virginia, despite Wilder's presence on the ticket, black turnout in the general election was estimated at 12 percent of the total turnout—3 percent less than in the previous gubernatorial election.

Explanations for the decrease in black turnout in Virginia range from the bad weather that disrupted traditional get-out-the-vote activities in black precincts to the Democratic party's tactical decision to avoid making any special appeals to blacks. Whatever the reason, stronger efforts to mobilize Virginia's black voters will be necessary in the future.

Despite low turnout in some places, black voters were decisive in a number of key races—most notably in the elections of Wilder and his gubernatorial running mate, Gerald Baliles, in Virginia, and in the reelection of Mayor Kathy Whitmire in Houston.

In several elections, although the black vote was not decisive, its cohesiveness was noteworthy for another reason. Heavily Democratic since 1964, in 1985 black voters heavily supported two victorious Republican incumbents. Sixty percent of black voters cast their ballots for the reelection of Republican Governor Thomas H. Kean of New Jersey, and 85 percent of black precincts went for Republican Mayor George Voinovich of Cleveland.

In sum, the impact of the black vote in 1985 and the willingness of blacks to vote for moderate Republicans in some areas show that black voters are a potentially significant constituency for either party.

The Realignment/Dealignment Debate

The results of the elections of 1985 in general and, in particular, the fact that blacks voted for Republicans in New Jersey and Cleveland have refueled the debate about realignment and dealignment.

"Realigning elections" are elections that mark the shift of long-standing party loyalties among groups and make a previously minority party into a majority party that dominates elections for a generation or more. Thus, a realigning election today would be one that initiated abiding Republican loyalties among groups such as organized labor, blacks, and others who had been either Democratic or indifferent to politics.

By dealignment, political scientists mean (a) a decline in the number of people who identify with or have strong commitments to either of the two parties, and (b) an increase in the proportion of people who change party identification as they shift their candidate preference.

Those who hold that a realignment is occurring tend to see the black votes for Kean and Voinovich as evidence that blacks may be joining (and helping to create) a conservative Republican majority party. Bolstering this view is the rise in Reagan's approval ratings among blacks (from 10 percent in 1982 to 27 percent in 1985, according to the Gallup poll taken in mid-October). But the kind of candidates Kean and Voinovich were, the particular nature of the Reagan approval ratings, and declining party identification among blacks actually call into question the conclusion that realignment is taking place among the electorate at large or among blacks.

The Kean and Voinovich Candidacies. Neither Kean nor Voinovich is a Reagan-style Republican. Kean, for example, is opposed to the Reagan administration's positions on issues like abortion, the ERA, the nuclear freeze, and divestiture in South Africa. A vote for Kean, who campaigned vigorously in New Jersey's black precincts and was endorsed by Coretta Scott King, can hardly be construed as a vote for Reagan's conservative social policy agenda.

Reagan Approval Ratings. Approval ratings may be an increasingly questionable yardstick, given the ex-

(Continued on page 5)

Ethnocentrism Distorts Foreign Policy

by Bernard Johns

(Mr. Johns is a senior fellow at the Joint Center, on detail from the U.S. Department of State under its Pearson Fellowship Program.)

Prejudice often prevents Americans from understanding and resolving domestic problems that have racial, religious, and ethnic overtones. Not surprisingly, those same prejudices shape our view of the world beyond America's shores and can affect U.S. foreign policy in ways damaging to us as a nation. To protect U.S. interests abroad more effectively, therefore, we need to understand better how our foreign policy and our perception of other societies, particularly those in the Third World, tend to be shaped by the same biases that operate in the domestic sphere.

Understanding Other Nations

The world in which America conducts its foreign policy bristles with competition and confrontation. Nations with diverse religious, cultural, ethnic, or racial backgrounds challenge each other politically and militarily. In a world so charged with hostility, we Americans cannot protect the nation's strategic interests or play a constructive role in resolving international disputes peacefully unless we understand societies whose traditions and mores are considerably different from our own. When foreigners act in ways that generate conflict, we need to know what caused their behavior and why it took the particular form it did.

The problem, however, is that when many members of the American foreign affairs community look at political conflicts in foreign countries, and especially in the Third World, they generally perceive simply the same forces that motivate political conflict and violence in the West. Political behavior in traditional, non-white societies is often motivated by cultural, tribal, religious, racial, and ethnic factors and interests that have no obvious counterparts in Western experience—yet the American foreign affairs community most often ignores those factors and perceives only what its own assumptions and prejudices allow it to see. Judging foreign political behavior by our own value system, American analysts often fail to comprehend what is actually occurring.

Policies formulated on the basis of such distorted reasoning have contributed to several of the major setbacks the United States has encountered abroad in the past 25 years. In Vietnam, Iran, and Lebanon, for example, American attempts to understand what was happening—and to respond appropriately—failed. The main reason they failed is that American analysts and policy makers misinterpreted the history, motivations, and determination of people in other countries.

Ethnocentric Assumptions

Some of the assumptions on which American foreign policy has been based can be characterized as ethnocentric. Ethnocentrism is the tendency to attach superior values to one's own cultural, ethnic, religious, or racial group and to view all other groups as inferior. The particular form of ethnocentrism that reflects a sense of racial superiority is racial discrimination. This occurs within the American foreign policy community as that community goes about defining U.S. foreign policy, and it manifests itself in the attitudes of individuals, in the informal institutional culture, and in exclusionary practices.

Most directly, the individual male Anglo-Saxons who dominate the American foreign policy community tend to draw upon their stereotyped views of black, Hispanic, Asian, and other American ethnic minorities to interpret the behavior of foreigners. For example, the U.S. civil rights movement is frequently invoked in very simplistic ways to explain recent political events in South Africa. Completely disregarded are the enormous differences between the ultimate political goals of blacks in the two countries—a black South African majority that seeks to obtain political power, and a black American minority that seeks equality. Or home-grown American solutions are proposed for such complex foreign political conflicts as the current hostilities in the Middle East, where the application of Western notions of conflict resolution may be totally inappropriate.

When the interpretations or solutions of the American foreign policy community prove invalid or unworkable, Americans are perplexed and tend to conclude that foreigners are unreasonable. The consequences may be disastrous for the countries involved. In reality, of course, the actions of a foreign nation or its people do not answer to American logic but emerge from a unique history of religious, ethnic, racial, sectarian, and cultural developments within a specific geographic and historic context.

The second channel through which ethnocentric values influence American foreign policy is the institutional environment within which decisions are made. When U.S. foreign-policy makers discuss issues, the institution within which they function may itself assure adherence to an informal code of behavior in which the opinions of superiors influence the analysis that is produced, and traditional (but often inaccurate) assumptions are merely reinforced. It then becomes unthinkable for the group to reexamine its assumptions and explore the possibility that its failures in policy analysis may be closely related to stereotyped thinking that distorts reality. Within that institutional environment, ethnocentric assumptions remain unchallenged.

Finally, one of the most blatant domestic manifestations of ethnocentrism is the prejudice behind the virtual exclusion of American blacks (as well as other minorities, and women) from American foreign-policy decisionmaking bodies. The principal vehicle for entrance into the U.S. Foreign Service as a career officer is the service's written qualifying examination. Minorities and women have always been underrepresented both among those taking the exam and among those passing it. A reason for the underrepresentation was provided by a 1979 report commissioned by then-Secretary of State Cyrus Vance and written by a committee headed by Ambassador Phillip C. Habib. The report suggested that the exam might not in fact test skills necessary for work in the foreign service and might have inherent cultural biases that discriminate against minorities and women.

The consequence of racially biased ethnocentric thinking, then, is that minorities and women remain underrepresented in the senior ranks of people who analyze and formulate U.S. foreign policy. The analyses underlying our foreign policy are therefore shaped by the assumptions of a small group whose meaningful exposure to ethnic, religious, and racial minorities in

(Continued on page 8)

FOCUS Index to Volume 13
January-December 1985

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Subject Index

	Month	Page
Business		
Alternative Service Delivery	Jan.	3
Blacks in the Executive Suite	Jan.	7
Can RICO Stop Minority Business "Fronts"?	Oct.	4
Making Equal Opportunity Pay	March	3
New Challenges to Local Economic Regulation	July	4
Perspective (school-business partnerships)	May	2
Robert L. Hill Named as Vice President of AGA	May	7
Civil Rights Issues		
Bills Introduced to Restore Rights Laws	Feb.	7
Black Economic Progress	April	6
Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1985	March	7
Great Expectations: The Dilemma of Racial Equality	Feb.	4
Perspective (Martin Luther King)	Jan.	2
The Seeds of Freedom	July	8
Defense Issues		
Army Promotes Record Number of Blacks to General	Jan.	7
Black Women in the Military	July	3
Minorities and Military Recruitment	Jan.	3
Update on Black Military Fliers	Feb.	7
Education		
Breaking the Cycle of Educational Failure	Sept.	6
Faculty Fellowships in Health Care Finance	May	7
A Fighting Chance for Black Youth	Sept.	4
Perspective (Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy	March	2
Perspective (school-business partnerships)	May	2
Thirty Years After *Brown*	Feb.	8
The Elderly		
Who Cares About the Black Aged?	Oct.	6
Employment Issues		
Black Economic Programs	April	6
Black Jobless Rate Up in February	April	7
Black Unemployment Rate Drops 1.6 Percent	Aug.	7
A Fighting Chance for Black Youth	Sept.	4
Labor Force Highlights, August	Sept.	8
Labor Force Highlights, September	Oct.	7
NAPFE Endorses Subminimum Wage Bill for Youth	July	7
A Perspective on the Labor Market	Nov.-Dec.	6
The Family		
Caring for Young Mothers	April	4
Conference on Black Children	Aug.	7
Dramatic Increase in Single Black Mothers	Sept.	3
A Fighting Chance for Black Youth	Sept.	4
Keeping Families Together	July	7
Perspective (black families)	Sept.	2
Federal Policy		
Can RICO Stop Minority Business "Fronts"?	Oct.	4
DOE Clearinghouse for Minority Energy Information	March	7
House Committee Allocates AID Funds to Minority Organizations	May	7
Making Equal Opportunity Pay	March	3
New Challenges to Local Economic Regulation	July	4
Reagan Administration Proposes Cutbacks in Food Programs for the Poor	April	7
Reagan's Judicial Appointments	March	4
Seeking a Budget Consensus	April	3
Update on the 1990 Census	March	7
International Relations		
Ethnocentrism Distorts Foreign Policy	Nov.-Dec.	4
S. Africa: On the Road to Revolution?	Aug.	6
Joint Center		
Robert McCormick Adams Joins JCPS Board of Governors	June	7
Marcus Alexis and Eleanor Holmes Norton to Head JCPS Task Forces on Economic and Social Issues	July	7
JCPS Announces Its Second Annual Distinguished Scholars Competition	Oct.	7

Subject Index (continued)

	Month	Page
JCPS Appoints New Senior Military Fellow	Aug.	7
JCPS Appoints Senior Fellow to Study Foreign Affairs	June	7
JCPS Eighth Annual Dinner	Jan.	7
JCPS Gets New Director of Communications	Aug.	7
JCPS Gets New Director of Marketing	April	7
Joint Center for Political Studies Distinguished Scholars Program Applications Invited	Jan.	8
Joint Center Researcher Writes Poverty Study for Population Reference Bureau	June	7
Mark Your Calendar—JCPS Annual Dinner Set for March 26	Nov.-Dec.	8
New JCPS Publication on Minorities and the Labor Market	Sept.	8
1985 Roster of BEOs Now Available	Aug.	7
Frank Parker, Prominent Civil Rights Attorney, Named First JCPS Distinguished Scholar	June	8
Bernard Rapoport Joins JCPS Board of Governors	July	7
Update on JCPS Eighth Annual Dinner	Feb.	7

Law Enforcement

	Month	Page
Improving American Policing	June	6

Political Participation

	Month	Page
Black Politics After the 1984 Elections*	Oct.	1
Black Politics: The Year in Review	Nov.-Dec.	3
Florida Allows County Commissioner Elections by District	Jan.	7
Perspective (black leaders and the black public)	Oct.	2
Perspective (the black vote)	Feb.	2
Perspective (blacks and political partisanship)	Aug.	2
Perspective (the media and election campaigns)	July	2
Perspective (political communications technology)	June	2
Perspective (political progress of blacks)	April	2
Political Organizations Elect New Officers	Jan.	7
Redividing the Political Pie	July	6
Selected U.S. Senate Races in 1986	March	8
Vote Recount in Indiana Contested	April	7
"We Can Work Together"	Aug.	3
Winning Statewide Office	Oct.	3

Poverty Issues

	Month	Page
Joint Center Researcher Writes Poverty Study for Population Reference Bureau	June	7
The Myths of Poverty	May	3
Reagan Administration Proposes Cutbacks in Food Programs for the Poor	April	7
Who Cares About the Black Aged?	Oct.	6
Who Lives in Public Housing?	May	6

Public Officials

	Month	Page
Black Power in the House	Feb.	7
Black Women State Legislators Organize Group	June	7
Blacks on the Bench	May	7
Councilman Ira Jackson Elected Chief of Atlanta Regional Commission	May	7
Dutch Morial President of U.S. Conference of Mayors	Feb.	7
1985 Roster of BEOs Now Available	June	7
Perspective (Wilder campaign for governor of Va.)	Nov.-Dec.	2
Political Organizations Elect New Officers	Jan.	7
Reagan's Judicial Appointments	March	4
6.2 Percent More BEOs in 1985	May	4
State of New York Gets Its First Black Elected Mayor	March	7
State Senator Wilder Runs for Va. Lieutenant Governor	July	7

Tributes to Black Achievers

	Month	Page
Baltimore Names Circuit Courthouse for Clarence Mitchell, Jr.	May	7
Perspective (Martin Luther King)	Jan.	2

Urban Issues

	Month	Page
Alternative Service Delivery	Jan.	3
The Urban Commuter	Jan.	5
Urban Renewal	June	3

Voting Rights

	Month	Page
Perspective (Martin Luther King)	Jan.	2
The Reincarnation of the Intent Standard	June	4
The Voting Rights Act: Twenty Years Later	Aug.	4

Women's Issues

	Month	Page
Bibliography on the Health of Minority Women	March	7
Black Women in the Military	July	3
Black Women State Legislators Organize Group	June	7
Legislative Fellowships on Women and Public Policy	April	7
Redividing the Political Pie	July	6
The Seeds of Freedom	July	8

---

*Conference Report

Author Index

Author	Article	Month	Page
Brimmer, Andrew F.	Black Economic Progress	April	6
Burbridge, Lynn C.	A Perspective on the Labor Market	Nov.-Dec	6
Burris, Roland W.	Winning Statewide Office	Oct.	3
Chisholm, Shirley	The Seeds of Freedom	July	8
Dade, Julie E.	Redividing the Political Pie	July	6
Daugherty, James R.	Black Women in the Military	July	3
	Minorities and Military Recruitment	Jan.	3
Dole, Robert	"We Can Work Together"	Aug.	3
Dorn, Edwin	Great Expectations: The Dilemma of Racial Equality	Feb.	4
Edelman, Marian Wright	Caring for Young Mothers	April	4
Engstrom, Richard L.	The Reincarnation of the Intent Standard	June	4
Gibbs, Jewelle Taylor	A Fighting Chance for Black Youth	Sept.	4
Gifford, Bernard R.	Breaking the Cycle of Educational Failure	Sept.	
Goldman, Sheldon	Reagan's Judicial Appointments	March	4
Gray, William H. III	Seeking a Budget Consensus	April	3
Johns, Bernard	Ethnocentrism Distorts Foreign Policy	Nov.-Dec.	4
	S. Africa: On the Road to Revolution?	Aug.	6
Mapp, Richard H.	Who Cares About the Black Aged?	Oct.	6
O'Hare, William P.	Dramatic Increase in Single Black Mothers	Sept.	3
	The Myths of Poverty	May	3
	The Urban Commuter	Jan.	5
Parker, Frank R.	The Voting Rights Act: Twenty Years Later	Aug.	4
Suggs, Robert E.	Alternative Service Delivery	Feb.	3
	Can RICO Stop Minority Business "Fronts"?	Oct.	4
	Making Equal Opportunity Pay	March	3
	New Challenges to Local Economic Regulation	July	4
Vincent, Deborah C.	Urban Renewal, 1985	June	3
Williams, Hubert	Improving American Policing	June	6
Williams, Linda F.	Black Politics After the 1984 Elections	Oct.	1*
	Black Politics: The Year in Review	Nov.-Dec.	3

---

*Conference Report

Name Index

Abdnor, James, Nov.-Dec., p.5
Adair, Augustus, Nov.-Dec., p. 7
Adams, Robert McCormick, June, p. 7
Alexis, Marcus, July, pp. 6, 7
Allain, Bill, May, p. 7
Anderson, Reuben V., May, p. 7
Angelou, Maya, July, p. 7
Arterton, Chris, Oct., p. 1*
Arthur, George, Nov.-Dec., p. 3
Austin, Richard H., Oct., p.3

Baliles Gerald, Nov.-Dec., p. 2; 3
Bane, Mary Jo, Sept., p. 3
Barker, Lucius, Oct., p. 1*
Barrett, Ernest, May, p. 7
Bates, Robert, Jr., Oct., p. 1*
Becraft, Carolyn, July, p. 3
Binkin, Martin, Jan., p. 3
Blackwood, Ronald A., March, p. 7; May, p.4
Bond, Julian, Nov.-Dec., p. 7
Bradley, Tom, July, p. 2; Nov.-Dec., p. 3
Brock, William, Aug., p. 2
Broh, C. Anthony, Oct., p. 1*
Brown, George, Oct., p. 3
Brown, Ron, Oct., p. 1*
Bryant, Faye, Oct., p. 2
Bush, George, Aug., p. 2

Carr, James H., July, p. 7
Carter, Jimmy, March, p. 4
Carter, Margaret, May, p. 4
Cavanagh, Thomas, Oct., p. 1*
Chambers, Julius, Aug., p. 3
Chisholm, Shirley, June, p. 7; July, p. 6
Cisneros, Henry G., March, p. 2
Clark, Alyce Griffen, July, p. 6
Clark, Kenneth, July, p. 8
Clarke, Augusta, July, p. 6
Clarke, Calvitt, Jr., June, p. 4
Collins, Joanne, July, p. 6
Cook, Carl Edward, April, p. 7
Cranston, Alan, Nov.-Dec., p. 5
Creedon, John J., Nov.-Dec., p. 8
Crotty, William, Oct., p. 1*
Cuomo, Mario, May, p. 7

Dalley, George, Oct., p. 1*
D'Amato, Alfonso, Aug., p. 3
Daugherty, James R., Aug., p. 7
Davis, Angela, July, p. 6
Denton, Jeremiah, Nov.-Dec., p. 5
Dinkins, Carol, March, p. 4
Dinkins, David, Nov.-Dec., p. 3
Dole, Elizabeth, Aug., p. 3
Dole, Robert, Feb., p. 7; Aug., p. 2
Dorn, Edwin, Oct., p. 1*
Douglas, Jan, Nov.-Dec., p. 7
DuBois, W. E. B., Feb., p. 4
Dymally, Mervyn M., Oct., p. 3

East, John, Nov.-Dec., p. 5
Easter, Maude, April, p. 7
Eaves, Reginald, Nov.-Dec., p. 7
Edmonds, J. Terry, Aug., p. 7
Ellwood, David, Sept., p. 3
Enloe, Cynthia, July, p. 3
Espy, Mike, Nov.-Dec., p. 7

Farrar, Eleanor, Oct., p. 1*
Farrell, Herman, Nov.-Dec., p. 3
Finney, Ernest, Jr., May, p. 7
Ford, Gerald, March, p. 4
Foster, Lorn, Oct., p. 1*
Fowler, Wyche, Nov.-Dec., p. 7
Franklin, John Hope, Nov.-Dec., p. 8
Frazier, Michael, Oct., p. 1*

Gamboa, Frank, July, p. 3
Gantt, Harvey, Nov.-Dec., p. 3
Gifford, Bernard, July, p. 7
Goldman, Paul, Nov.-Dec., p. 2
Gray, C. Vernon, Oct., p. 1*
Gray, William III, May, p. 7
Green, Joseph, June, p. 4
Gunn, Wendell W., July, p. 7

Habib, Phillip C., Nov.-Dec., p. 4
Hall, Katie, May, p. 4
Hamburg, David A., March, p. 2; Nov.-Dec., p. 8
Harris, Donald, July, p. 7
Hart, Gary, July, p. 2; Nov.-Dec., p. 5
Hawkins, Paula, Aug., p. 3; Nov.-Dec., p. 5
Height, Dorothy, July, p. 6; Oct., p. 2
Hill, Robert L., May, p. 7
Hillman, Gracia, Oct., p. 1*
Holloway, Wendell, Nov.-Dec., p. 5
Holmes, Robert, Oct., p. 1*
Hooks, Ben, Aug., p. 3; Oct., p. 2

Jackson, Ira, May, p. 7
Jackson, James, Oct., p. 1*
Jackson, Jesse, April, p. 2; July, p. 2; Aug., p. 4; Oct., p. 2
Jacob, John, Aug., p. 3; Oct., p. 2
Jeffries, John, July, p. 7; Sept., p. 8
Johns, Bernard, June, p. 7
Johnson, Lyndon B., March, p. 4; April, p. 6; Aug., p. 4; Sept., p. 2
Johnson, Robert Wood, May, p. 7
Johnson-Brown, Hazel, July, p. 3
Jones, Roxanne, May, p. 4
Jordan, Vernon, Aug., p. 3; Oct., p. 2

Katzenbach, Nicholas, Aug., p. 4
Kean, Thomas H., Nov.-Dec., p. 3
Kemp, Jack, Aug., p. 2
Kemp, Robert, July, p. 7
Kennedy, Edward, Feb., p. 7
Kennedy, John F., Feb., p. 4
Kilson, Martin, Oct., p. 1*
King, Coretta S., Oct., p. 2; Nov.-Dec., p. 3
King, Martin Luther, Jr., Jan., p. 2; July, p. 7
King, William S., Aug., p. 7

Ladner, Joyce, July, p. 7
Lawson, Steven F., Aug., p. 4
Leahy, Patrick, Nov.-Dec., p. 5
Leland, Mickey, Oct., p. 2
Lewis, John, Nov.-Dec., p. 7
Lewis-Beck, Michael, Nov.-Dec., p. 5
Lichter, Linda S., Oct., p. 2
Loury, Glenn C., July, p. 7
Lowery, Joseph, Aug., p. 3; Oct., p. 2

McGahey, Richard, Sept., p. 8
McIntyre, Richard D., April, p. 7
McLemore, Leslie, Oct., p. 1*
McMurray, Georgia, July, p. 7
Malcom, Shirley M., March, p. 2
Mathias, Charles, Aug., pp. 2, 3; Nov.-Dec., p. 5
Mattingly, Mack, Aug., p. 3; Nov.-Dec., pp. 5, 7
Mfume, Kweisi, Nov.-Dec., p. 7
Miller, Yvonne, May, p. 4
Milner, Thirman L., Nov.-Dec., p. 3
Mitchell, Clarence, Jr., May, p. 7
Mitchell, Parren, Nov.-Dec., p. 7
Mondale, Walter F., July, p. 6
Morial, Ernest, Feb., p. 7; Oct., p. 2
Morris, Milton D., Oct., pp. 1*, 7;
Morrison, Trudi, Aug., p. 2
Moynihan, Daniel P., Sept., p. 2
Myrdal, Gunnar, Feb., p. 4

Nathan, Richard P., July, p. 7
Neckerman, Kathryn, Sept., p. 4
Nixon, Richard, Feb., p. 2
Norton, Eleanor Holmes, July, pp. 6, 7
Norwood, Janet L., Aug., p. 7

Oglou, John, July, p. 7
O'Hare, William P., March, p. 7; June, p. 7
Olesen, Virginia, March, p. 7
Orfield, Gary, July, p. 7

Parker, Frank R., June, p. 7; Oct., p. 7
Parker, Henry E., Oct., p. 3
Petit, A. Dwight, Nov.-Dec., p. 7
Pettway, Jo Celeste, May, p. 4
Phillips, Vel, Oct., p. 3
Phillips, Wendell, Nov.-Dec., p. 7
Philpott, A. L., Nov.-Dec., p. 2
Preston, Michael P., Oct., p. 1*

Quayle, Dan, Aug., p. 3

Rapoport, Bernard, July, p. 7
Reagan, Ronald, Feb., p. 2; March, p. 4; April, p. 3; Nov.-Dec., pp. 3, 5
Reed, Adolph, Jr., Oct., p. 1*
Rice, Norman, Nov.-Dec., p. 3
Rice, Tom W., Nov.-Dec., p. 5
Riles, Wilson C., Oct., p. 3
Robb, Charles, Nov.-Dec., p. 2
Roosevelt, Franklin D., March, p. 4; Aug., p. 3

Schramm, Carl J., May, p. 7
Scott, Portia, Nov.-Dec., p. 7
Simms, Margaret, July, p. 7
Sims, Ron, Nov.-Dec., p. 3
Smith, Barbara, July, p. 3
Smith, Robert, Oct., p. 1*
Specter, Arlen, Aug., pp. 2, 3; Nov.-Dec., p. 5
Starks, Robert, Oct., p. 1*
Swift, Jane, March, p. 4
Symms, Stephen, Nov.-Dec., p. 5

Terry, Mary Sue, Nov.-Dec., p. 2
Thayer, Bennie, Nov.-Dec., p. 5
Thomas, Franklin A., Nov.-Dec., p. 8
Thompson, James, Aug., p. 2
Toote, Gloria, July, p. 6
Tucker, C. Delores, June, p. 7; July, p. 6

Vance, Cyrus, Nov.-Dec., p. 4
Voinovich, George, Nov.-Dec., p. 3

Walton, Hanes, Oct., p. 1*
Weinberger, Caspar, Feb., p. 7
Whatley, Warren, July, p. 7
White, Robert L., July, p. 7
Whitmire, Kathy, Nov.-Dec., p. 3
Wilcher, Shirley, July, p. 6
Wilder, Lawrence Douglas, July, p. 7; Nov.-Dec. pp. 2, 3, 5
Wilkins, Roger, Oct., p. 1*
Williams, Ann C., May, p. 7
Williams, Eddie N., Aug., p. 3
Williams, Faye, Nov.-Dec., p. 5
Williams, Rhonda, July, p. 7
Wilson, Franklin, July, p. 7
Wilson, William, July, p. 7; Sept., p. 4
Wisdom, John, June, p. 4
Woodside, William S., May, p. 2
Woody, Betty, July, p. 3

Young, Andrew, June, p. 2; Nov.-Dec., pp. 3, 7
Young, Coleman, Nov.-Dec., p. 3

---

*Conference Report

Black Politics . . .

(Continued from page 3)

tent of the gap that has opened up between approval of the president personally and support for his economic policies. In mid-October, the president was popular with 66 percent of all Americans. But whereas in early 1985 about 55 percent of all Americans approved the president on specific economic issues (unemployment, taxes, the farm problem, and the deficit), in late 1985 the figures were much lower. They ranged from the 30s to the low 40s for all Americans, and from 14 percent to 22 percent for blacks. This hardly indicates a surge of pro-Reagan policy support among anyone, let alone blacks.

Party Identification. Despite the media's concentration on the softening of black ties to the Democratic party, during the years of the Reagan presidency blacks have increasingly identified with the Democratic party. In 1972, when 68 percent of the black population was affiliated with the Democrats, 37 percent of all blacks considered themselves strong Democrats while another 31 percent considered themselves weak Democrats. By 1984, the percentage of blacks identifying themselves as Democrats had climbed to 76 percent, with 55 percent viewing themselves as strong Democrats and 21 percent as weak Democrats. During the same period, the percentage of blacks identifying themselves as independents almost doubled—from 11 percent in 1972 to 21 percent in 1984. In the post-Reagan era, probably more blacks will identify with the Republican party, but the main trend seems to be for blacks, like other Americans, to identify themselves more and more as independents and less and less as partisans. The decline of partisan identification among blacks makes it more likely that blacks will support candidates from either party who appeal to their interests.

Thus, the results of the 1985 elections indicate that dealignment, in both senses, seems to be occurring. Party identification is declining, and at the same time shifts in party identification are increasing.

The 1986 Congressional Elections

What do the 1985 elections presage for the 1986 Congressional elections? Two aspects of the 1985 vote, in particular, are likely still to be significant in 1986: Republican hopes for realignment will probably again be disappointed, and incumbency will probably continue to be an advantage, but less so in the Senate than in the House.

In the House, between 1956 and 1980, incumbents who sought reelection won 92.2 percent of the time. Nothing in 1986 is likely to change that pattern, and few, if any, observers expect the House to change hands.

In the Senate, too, incumbents have increasingly had the advantage. Whereas 10 incumbents lost in 1978 and 13 in 1980, only 2 lost in 1982 and 3 in 1984. The Republicans have a 53-47 majority in the Senate, so the advantage of incumbency should work to their benefit. But the number and distribution of Senate seats at risk may override that factor.

Barring realignment, the more seats a president's party has up for reelection, the more seats it loses—and 22 of the 34 Senate seats up for reelection in 1986 are held by Republicans. To regain control of the Senate, the Democrats need take only 4 of the 22, while keeping all of their own seats. Six Republican seats appear vulnerable—those in Florida (Paula Hawkins), South Dakota (James Abdnor), Alabama (Jeremiah Denton), Idaho (Stephen Symms), Pennsylvania (Arlen Specter), and Georgia (Mack Mattingly). Several seats being vacated by Republicans also seem vulnerable (for example, those now held by Charles Mathias of Maryland and John East of North Carolina).

Also working against incumbency is the disproportionate concentration of 1986 Senate elections in economically troubled states. Many of the states with 1986 Senate elections are experiencing local recessions. An even greater number of states in which seats are not up for election are not experiencing recessions.

Still another factor that could work against incumbency is the black vote. Three incumbents have extremely poor voting records on issues of concern to minorities. All three—Denton, Hawkins, and Mattingly—won narrowly in 1980 and all are from states with large concentrations of unregistered black voters. In these and other Senate contests, a high registration and voting rate among blacks could determine the outcome of the election.

Among the Democrats, the incumbents who may be vulnerable are Patrick Leahy (Vermont), Alan Cranston (California), and Gary Hart (Colorado), but many analysts report that the prospects of all three are improving. Both Cranston and Leahy are running in economically prosperous states and now lead in the polls. Speculation is mounting that Hart may decide not to run and will instead work on building his presidential campaign for 1988.

It is too early to use statistical forecasting models to predict the outcomes of Senate elections, but political scientists Michael Lewis-Beck and Tom W. Rice have created models in which they tested various levels of presidential popularity in combination with various levels of economic growth. On the basis of their findings, they argue that even in the scenario most favorable to the Republicans (high popularity ratings for the president and strong real growth in GNP), so many Republican incumbents are at risk that the party is almost sure to lose its Senate majority.

Black Congressional Candidates in 1986

For black congressional hopefuls, the most significant result of the elections of 1985 was the victory of Wilder in Virginia. His election should encourage more blacks to run in majority-white jurisdictions and should encourage both major parties to give greater support to black candidates. Black candidates running in majority-white congressional districts should certainly study Wilder's campaign strategy, and so should black candidates in majority-black districts (such as the Mississippi second, see below).

A number of black candidates for the U.S. House have already announced (or are studying their prospects) in majority-white districts. Among them are Faye Williams in Louisiana's eighth district (Alexandria); Wendell Holloway in Maryland's eighth district (Montgomery County); and Bennie Thayer in Maryland's fifth district (Prince George's County). Each of these candidates faces an uphill battle.

In majority-black districts, several key races to watch in 1986 are the Mississippi second (the Delta), the Georgia fifth (Atlanta), and the Maryland seventh (Baltimore).

(Continued on page 7)

A Perspective on the Labor Market

by Lynn C. Burbridge

(The author is senior economist at the Joint Center.)

The end of the year is a good time to take stock of the labor market and in particular to note the relative positions of blacks and whites.

The monthly reports of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, make it clear that for some groups, little has changed during 1985. The data indicate that the labor market position of black men has continued to deteriorate, while that of white men has improved. The position of both black and white women also continues to improve (although unemployment rates are twice as high for black women as for white women). For white teenagers, the picture is mixed: their percentage in the labor market has increased, but so has their rate of unemployment.

In one area, however, we do see evidence of change. The participation of black teenagers in the labor force has significantly increased, and despite the greater number of black teens seeking work, their unemployment rate has stayed about the same. Nevertheless, black teenagers still have a way to go before catching up with their white counterparts.

To reach these findings, we chose two key indices—the unemployment rate and the labor force participation rate—and we compared them by race, age, and sex for four dates: October of this year, October of last year, and two previous Octobers (1982 and 1979) that are useful points of comparison. (See the accompanying table.) October 1982 was a time of low economic activity; the recession of 1981-1982 would reach its lowest point in November 1982. October 1979, in contrast, was a time of high economic activity; the growth period that had started 4-1/2 years earlier would peak in January 1980. Thus, we can compare the figures for 1985 with those for last year and with those for a "bad" year (1982) and a "good" year (1979).

A note on our two indices. The labor force consists of people who are working or seeking work, and the **unemployment rate** is the percentage of unemployed people in the labor force. The **labor force participation rate** is the proportion of the total population that is in the labor force. In other words, the first index measures the situation of the people who are available for work, and the second measures the extent to which the people in a given population are in fact available. (The figures are "seasonally adjusted," which means that the raw numbers have been somewhat modified to account for fluctuations caused by seasonal events, such as changes in the weather and the opening and closing of schools. These adjustments make it easier to identify changes that specifically derive from economic factors.)

What follows is a narrative explanation of the data presented in the table.

Unemployment Rates

During the past year, unemployment rates declined for all groups except black men and white teenagers. (The rate for black men stayed about the same, and the rate for white teenagers rose.) But when the unemployment rates for October 1985 are compared with the unemployment rates for the bottom of the recession in 1982, all groups without exception show a decline. The largest decline (in percentage terms) is recorded by white men, whose unemployment rate dropped by 42 percent during the three years. The smallest decline (in percentage terms) is recorded by black teenagers, whose unemployment rate dropped by 17 percent. For white teenagers the unemployment rate dropped by 20 percent, and for all other groups it dropped by between 25 and 30 percent.

When this year's unemployment rates are compared with those of 1979 (the "good" year), however, the rates for all groups, especially black men, show an increase. The rate of unemployment for black men rose by 63 percent between 1979 and 1985 (from 8.6 to 14.0 percent). For white men (who had the largest drop in unemployment between 1982 and 1985), the rate between 1979 and 1985 increased by 38 percent. The increase for black and white women and black and white

Unemployment Rates, Labor Force Participation Rates, and Percentage Changes, 1979-1985

	Overall		Men (20+)		Women (20+)		Teenagers (16-19)	
	Black	White	Black	White	Black	White	Black	White
Unemployment Rates								
Oct. 1979	11.5%	5.1%	8.6%	3.7%	10.2%	5.0%	35.1%	14.4%
Oct. 1982	20.1	9.3	19.6	8.8	16.2	7.6	47.7	21.5
Oct. 1984	15.3	6.3	13.4	5.4	13.4	5.8	40.2	15.9
Oct. 1985	15.0	6.1	14.0	5.1	12.1	5.5	39.7	17.2
Percentage Change 1979-1985*	30.4	19.6	62.8	37.8	18.6	10.0	13.1	19.4
Labor-Force Participation Rates								
Oct. 1979	62.3	64.1	77.0	80.0	56.2	50.2	40.6	61.1
Oct. 1982	61.0	64.4	74.4	79.4	56.1	52.1	37.5	57.3
Oct. 1984	62.8	64.6	75.0	78.6	58.0	53.2	40.5	56.9
Oct. 1985	62.8	65.3	74.3	78.6	58.2	54.4	42.7	58.0
Percentage Change 1979-1985*	0.8	1.9	-3.5	-1.8	3.6	8.4	5.2	-5.3

*Percentage change is the absolute difference between 1985 and 1979 divided by the amount in the base year (1979).

Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

. . . Labor Market

teenagers was between 10 and 20 percent. White women, with a 10 percent change, most nearly approached their 1979 unemployment rate.

Labor Force Participation Rates

Since last year, the labor force participation rate has increased or remained the same for every group except black men, whose participation rate declined by 0.7 percentage points. Black teenagers had the largest increase, followed by white women and white teenagers. The participation rates of white men and black women remained about the same this year as last.

In comparison with 1982 (the bottom of the latest recession), participation rates rose in 1985 for all groups except white and black men, for both of whom the rates declined slightly (for white men, by 0.8 percentage points, and for black men, by 0.1 percentage points). For white and black adult women and for white teenagers, the increases ranged from 0.7 to 2.3 percentage points. For black teenagers—the group with the lowest overall participation rate—the increase between 1982 and 1985 was a dramatic 5.2 percentage points.

That increase is all the more interesting, since (at 42.7 percent) the participation rate for black teenagers is higher in 1985 than it was in 1979, our "good" reference year (when it was 40.6 percent). This represents a 5.2 percent increase between 1979 and 1985. In contrast, for white teenagers the participation rate in 1985 is 3.1 percentage points lower than it was in 1979 (for a 5.3 percent decrease between 1979 and 1985). Black teenagers still have a much lower participation rate than white teenagers, but at least their rate of participation relative to that of their white counterparts has improved.

For white and black women, as for black teenagers, participation in the labor force has increased since 1979—not surprisingly, given long-term trends in the labor force participation of women. Also consistent with long-term trends are the participation rates of white and black men (particularly black men), which declined between 1979 and 1985.

Employment is only one index of a group's relative position in the labor market. Other, equally important indices are earnings and occupational status, which we will examine in future issues of *Focus*.

Black Politics . . .

(Continued from page 5)

In the Mississippi second, black Assistant State Attorney General Mike Espy has announced his intention to seek the Democratic nomination. Espy is described by most observers as "articulate," "well-versed on the issues," and "a team player." Blacks make up 53 percent of the voting-age population of this district, so if no other black candidate runs, he has an excellent chance of winning the nomination. Black candidates lost in the general elections of 1982 and 1984, however. The critical questions for the general election in this district are whether black voters will turn out in large enough numbers and whether white Democrats will support a black candidate in greater numbers than they did in the past two elections.

In Georgia's fifth district, which is 60 percent black, Representative Wyche Fowler is considering running for the Senate against Mack Mattingly. Prospective black candidates for Fowler's seat include State Senator Julian Bond, Atlanta City Councilman John Lewis, Fulton County Commissioner Reginald Eaves, and political activist Jan Douglas, all Democrats, and journalist Portia Scott on the Republican side. If Fowler does run for the Senate, one of the Democratic black candidates is almost certain to win in this district, which elected Andrew Young in 1972.

Congressman Parren Mitchell's decision to retire from Congress has made the seventh district in Maryland another race to watch. The voting-age population there is 70 percent black. Blacks who have already announced their intention to seek the Democratic nomination include political science professor Augustus Adair, Baltimore attorney A. Dwight Petit, State Representative Wendell Phillips, and Baltimore City Councilman Kweisi Mfume. It is too early to predict who will win, and much depends on whether Representative Mitchell endorses a candidate. In any event, the winner is certain to be black.

Currently 20 blacks serve in the U.S. House of Representatives. With Mitchell being replaced by a black Democrat and the other incumbents all but assured of reelection, this number will not drop after the election. Given good prospects for Espy in Mississippi and for one of the black candidates if Fowler should run for the Senate in Georgia, at least two additional blacks may be added to the House. The number of blacks in the U.S. House of Representatives would then be 22—higher than it has ever been.

Ethnocentrism . . .

(Continued from page 4)

this country has been very limited and whose perceptions of others, at home and abroad, are usually seriously flawed. This is particularly true for perceptions of the non-white, non-Western Third World.

Correcting Distortions

Distortions caused by ethnocentrism can certainly be remedied, if not eliminated. Better education can help, especially when it includes cross-cultural and ethnic studies, studies on the nature of prejudice, and (as suggested by the noted black scholar John Hope Franklin) a comprehensive history of the United States that accurately reflects the cultural, socioeconomic, and political realities of American life.

Moreover, blacks themselves can act to make a difference. The ability of any American ethnic group to influence U.S. foreign policy is directly related to its ability to influence domestic policy. As long as black Americans fail to use the ballot box to express their concerns about U.S. foreign policies that might directly affect the economic, political, or social well-being of black peoples, their concerns will generally be ignored in Washington.

By educational or political means, American policy makers may be brought to recognize the possibility that when their reasoning is flawed by prejudice, the costs to our national interest are excessive. Certainly, the history of U.S. foreign policy in the past 25 years argues for an agonizing reappraisal of assumptions that have too often been proved inaccurate. Among the significant political events that the American foreign affairs community failed to predict are the tremendous increase in Soviet defense spending in the early 1960s, the development of China's plutonium bomb, the expulsion of the Soviets from Egypt and Somalia, the 1973 Arab Israel War, China's second cultural revolution, the Iranian revolution, and the 1980 Friendship Treaty between Syria and the Soviet Union. All were unforeseen, and the unpreparedness was at least partly the result of biased, ethnocentric thinking.

David A. Hamburg, president of the Carnegie Corporation, stressed in his 1984 presidential essay that ethnocentrism is a phenomenon we urgently need to understand:

> Despite the immense, ultimate, significance of the problems of prejudice, ethnocentrism, and conflict, these subjects are still pretty low on the world's agenda—in science, in the media, in the business community, in the churches, and in governments. The powerful sectors of society everywhere tend to be complacent about such matters and to see them fuzzily as someone else's problems far away. Avoidance and denial tend to subtitute for careful scrutiny; authority substitutes for evidence; blaming substitutes for problem solving. The capacity for wishful thinking in these matters is enormous, as is the capacity for self-justification. But the issue must be faced now in a way that it has never been before.

Hamburg's warning words are clear: "No longer have we the luxury to indulge in prejudice and in ethnocentric extremes."

Mark Your Calendar—
JCPS Annual Dinner Set for March 26

The Joint Center will hold its ninth annual dinner on March 26, 1986, at the Washington Hilton Hotel, Washington, D.C.

The national chairman of this year's event is John J. Creedon, president and chief executive officer of Metropolian Life and affiliated companies. The featured speaker is Franklin A. Thomas, president and chief executive officer of the Ford Foundation.

Sponsors' tables of ten are $5,000; patrons' tables of ten are $2,000; individual tickets are $200. Reservations may be made by calling the Joint Center at 202-626-3555.

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Joint Center for Political Studies

Perspective

Martin Luther King Holiday

His struggles were inspired by his faith in God and his commitment to the brotherhood of man. This faith gave him the strength to climb mountains, to move the powerful, and to walk tall in the valley of the shadow of death. His life of achievement amidst struggle inspires us today. Those who survive him must acknowledge the power of his character, charisma, and creativity.

Other words that can be used to describe the meaning and impact of Martin Luther King are those chosen by the theologian Martin Luther for his own epitaph: "I neither can nor will recant anything, since it is neither right nor safe to act against conscience. . . . Here I stand. I can do no other." Martin Luther King—at another time and place—stood his ground against bigotry, injustice, and immorality. He, too, could do no other.

This month we pay a richly deserved special tribute to King's leadership. The first national holiday marking his birth 57 years ago is a symbolic occasion to reaffirm our commitment to brotherhood, freedom, justice, and equality.

We celebrate to gain strength from his courage, from the beginning in Montgomery in 1955 to the end in Memphis in 1968—13 years that changed and are still changing the life of this nation. We celebrate to say thanks for his victories on so many battlefields: the Montgomery bus boycott, public accommodations, voting rights, and equal employment opportunity. We open our hearts and minds to his inspiration and his sermons of love and hope. In this spirit we can even forgive his persecutors.

But above all, we should use the King holiday to rededicate ourselves to the proposition that Martin Luther King's dream should neither die nor be deferred. We can honor his memory in a thousand ways. I choose to honor him for two legacies that have special meaning to black Americans.

The first challenges each of us to use the power of politics and public office to pursue justice, equality, and true liberation for all Americans. King knew that in America effective political participation is the shortest road to power-sharing and to improving the human condition. Law and moral suasion have limits, but political power endures as long as we profess to be a democratic society. Thus, King called for a nonviolent "revolution of values" that relied, in part, on law and moral suasion, but more heavily on political action. As historian David Lewis put it, King believed that "racial compassion had to be reinforced by old fashioned American political *quid pro quo*."

The second legacy that has special meaning was King's challenge to black Americans to "rise to the level of self-criticism." Doing so, he said, was a "sign of high maturity, not weakness." By self-criticism, King said, "I mean critical thinking about ourselves as a people and the course we have charted or failed to chart."

Rising to the level of self-criticism is an enormous challenge. It means doing some critical thinking about ourselves. It means being willing to face the future with courage and vision, mindful of the past but not shackled by it. It means being unafraid to grasp new ideas that are appropriate to our present circumstances and dilemmas.

As I reflect on these two legacies—political action and self-criticism— in the context of today's realities, I am convinced that blacks should indeed chart new courses in pursuit of justice and equality. We need to rededicate ourselves to *direct action* in order to influence government and society. By direct action I do not mean only confrontation and protest, although they are sometimes appropriate, but a wide range of political and personal initiatives, such as registering, voting, competing for public office, lobbying, mobilizing public opinion, and building coalitions. But with equal vigor Dr. King would have us pursue direct action aimed at spurring our people to become better prepared educationally, to be more productive and more resourceful, and to be more mindful of the values that have sustained us this far.

Eddie N. Williams
President

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The King We Should Remember

by David Garrow

(The author is associate professor of political science at the City College of New York and the City University Graduate Scool. A former visiting fellow at the Joint Center for Political Studies, he is the author of Protest at Selma *and* The FBI and Martin Luther King, Jr. *His comprehensive study of Dr. King and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference,* Bearing the Cross, *will be published later this year.)*

America's first official, national celebration of the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr., offers all of us a valuable opportunity to reflect on the achievements of the civil rights movement during the 1950s and 1960s. It also gives us an appropriate occasion to consider the challenges that remain and to ponder the major obstacles faced by present-day proponents of equal rights and economic justice.

In addition, however, the King holiday exposes us to certain risks. Two, in particular, stand out. First, in celebrating the spirit and achievements of the man, we should not forget or minimize his message. King's political agenda for changing and improving American society, after all, reached far beyond what the movement achieved during his own lifetime. Second, in commemorating King's courage and commitment, it is essential that we not focus too exclusively on the civil rights contributions of King alone and thereby slight or ignore the vital roles played by thousands of others. Were we to celebrate King's birthday with an excessive focus on him individually, we would be giving tens of thousands of younger Americans the idea that without a charismatic symbolic leader, meaningful political change cannot be expected to take place in America.

From Civil Rights to Human Rights

The image of Martin Luther King, Jr., that predominates in the minds of many Americans is that of the remarkably talented orator whose "I Have a Dream" speech at the 1963 March on Washington is considered one of the great public addresses in U.S. history. Together with his "Letter from Birmingham Jail," written four months earlier, that speech at the Lincoln Memorial on August 28 carried the southern movement's message of racial justice, Biblical faith, and Christian love to millions of people around the globe.

King's emphasis on the centrality of love and nonviolence in the black freedom struggle dated back eight years to December 1955. That was when his fellow community leaders in Montgomery, Alabama, drafted him as president of the new organization they had set up to pursue the municipal bus boycott sparked by the arrest of Mrs. Rosa Parks, who had refused to surrender her seat on a bus to a white man. Barely 27 years old when he first emerged as a symbol of southern blacks' nonviolent refusal to endure segregation any longer, the youthful minister came to represent not only the Montgomery protesters but also other, later activists—those who kicked off the student lunch-counter sit-ins of 1960 and the "freedom rides" of 1961.

But King's dream had other elements in it besides eliminating racial discrimination, loving one's enemies, and practicing nonviolence. During the first nine years of his public career, extending from Montgomery up through the 1965 voting rights demonstrations in Selma, Alabama, his primary political focus was seeking enactment of federal legislation to outlaw segregation and to eliminate the discriminatory practices that prevented black Southerners from exercising political power. "Give us the ballot," King intoned in his first speech from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, delivered at the oft-forgotten 1957 Prayer Pilgrimage for Freedom. Several years later, after the dramatic 1963 protests in Birmingham and then the Selma demonstrations, Congress passed the two major legislative achievements of the civil rights movement—the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Some current retrospectives of the 1960s portray King as a completely successful American reform leader whose dream was fulfilled by those two pieces of legislation and by America's abolition of officially sanctioned racial discrimination. In truth, such a portrayal is highly inaccurate. After 1965, King came to think of himself as far more than a racial reformer, and his explicit political agenda reached far beyond measures like the 1964 and 1965 acts. In his final years, pursuing economic justice at home and nonmilitaristic policies abroad, he suffered deep anguish from America's unwillingness to change its self-destructive national priorities and his own inability to alter the nation's course.

From 1965 on, one of King's most regular public refrains was how the dream he had articulated in Washington in 1963 had turned into "a nightmare." Looking back, he said, the turning point had come hardly two weeks after the March on Washington, when four young girls were killed in the Sunday morning terror-bombing of Birmingham's Sixteenth Street Baptist Church. Those deaths, like the murders in June 1964 of three civil rights workers in Neshoba County, Mississippi, and the Selma-related killings of Jimmie Lee Jackson, James Reeb, and Viola Liuzzo, brought home to King and other activists that the human costs of the movement's victories would be high indeed.

More important in King's political evolution, however, was his gradual and disheartening realization, especially in the fall of 1965, that the daily lives of most black people—particularly the economically deprived in northern cities as well as the deep South—would not be nearly as affected by federal statutes like the 1964 and 1965 acts as he had assumed they would. Economic deprivation—no jobs, poor housing, and inadequate schools—was a far more important and immutable fact of life for America's underclass than the inability to patronize a lunch counter or even cast a ballot.

Beginning in that fall of 1965, therefore, Martin Luther King, Jr., began to sound some much harsher notes in his comments on American society and the fundamental changes he was now coming to realize were required. The core of the problem, he told his Ebenezer Baptist Church congregation in Atlanta one Sunday, was America's inequitable distribution of wealth. "If our economic system is to survive, there has to be a better distribution of wealth. . . . We can't

(Continued on page 6)

Taxes, the Budget, and the Poor

by Lynn Burbridge

(The author, an economist, is a research associate at the Joint Center.)

Just when it seemed as if some tax relief was in sight for low-income families, they were thrown a curve by a Congress and a president struggling to eliminate the U.S. budget deficit. The "relief"—which may yet arrive—was to come in the form of the tax bill drawn up by the House Ways and Means Committee, promising to reduce the taxes paid by the working poor. The "curve" is coming in the form of the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings Act to reduce the federal budget deficit.

The attention now being given to these two issues—raising revenue and balancing the budget—reflects the increased importance of fiscal policy in debates on social policy issues. Until relatively recently, advocates for poor and minority families paid little attention to the creation of federal *revenue*—monies raised to meet the needs of the U.S. budget—or to the relation between revenue and expenditure. Instead, their primary concern had been with only the *expenditure* side of the budget—the allocation of funds to programs and agencies that serve the poor and other disadvantaged groups.

Particularly during the Reagan presidency, however, national attention has shifted from expenditures to revenues. One reason is that many programs serving the poor have suffered sizeable cuts precisely on the grounds that government revenues are limited. Another reason is that the growing tax burden on the working poor has aroused concern about that particular source of revenue. Finally, as the budget deficit has swollen, the goal of reconciling revenues with expenditures has become more urgent; and in the interest of balancing the budget, further cuts may be imposed on programs for poor families.

Tax Changes and the Working Poor

During the past four years, taxes have been declining for everyone except the working poor. Between 1980 and 1984, more and more poor families that had paid no taxes (or a minimal amount) were drawn into the tax system. This is reflected in the findings of a study made by the Urban Institute: during that same period, the federal tax burden (taxes as a percentage of before-tax income) on those whose income puts them in the lowest fifth of the population increased 140 percent (from 0.5 to 1.2 percent). For everyone else, the tax burden decreased (albeit modestly).

The situation throughout most of the 1970s was different. In those years Congress designed the tax code in such a way that if people had incomes below the poverty level (which is three times the cost of a nutritional diet for a family of a given size), they did not have to pay taxes. As inflation pushed up the dollar value of the poverty level, the minimum amount of income on which taxes had to be paid increased accordingly. By 1981, another readjustment in the minimum amount of taxable income seemed necessary. However, the tax reform bill of 1981 failed to make that readjustment. As a result, many low-income families had to pay additional taxes, and some low-income families had to pay taxes for the first time.

Various tax reform bills now before Congress, including the House Ways and Means bill, would change this. They would not only exempt families in poverty from paying taxes, but they would also prevent a repetition of the inflation-triggered situation of the early 1980s. Overall, therefore, the Ways and Means bill and others would promise some tax relief to those people who are struggling to support their families without relying on welfare. (The Ways and Means bill has passed the House but has yet to come before the Senate, where its passage is by no means assured.)

Gramm-Rudman-Hollings

Taxes represent revenues. Expenditures are the other side of the same coin, for ultimately it is desirable to reconcile taxes and revenue with each other.

In 1981, revenues decreased, as Congress cut taxes for nonpoor families and businesses. At the same time expenditures increased, as the monies spent for defense went up. The result has been the largest budget deficit in the history of the United States. Concerned about this, Congress recently passed, and the president signed, the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (known as Gramm-Rudman-Hollings).

That law requires total federal spending to be reduced to specific target levels every year through 1991, when the budget will finally be balanced. If, in any given year, the president and Congress do not lower the budget to the specified target level, automatic across-the-board cuts will be made in both defense and nondefense programs. Fifty percent of all automatic cuts will come from defense and 50 percent from nondefense programs.

Several programs affecting the poor, however, will be exempted from the automatic cuts: AFDC (Aid to Families With Dependent Children), SSI (Supplemental Security Income), WIC (Women, Infants, Children), Food Stamps, Child Nutrition, Medicaid, and the Earned Income Tax Credit. We will refer to all these as transfer programs. Cuts in other programs will be automatic, but limited. For example, several health programs (including Medicare, veterans, community, migrant, and Indian health programs) will be limited to cuts of no more than 1 percent in the first year and 2 percent in the second. (These cuts are small, but the cost of health care is increasing; and the working poor—many of whom have no health insurance—often rely on community health programs.) Still other programs, such as those for unemployment, student loans, and child support enforcement (which is very important for female-headed households), face cutbacks subject to special rules.

After the programs with various limitations and special rules are cut, all remaining programs must be cut by an equal percentage to achieve the deficit reduction prescribed by law. Among the programs that may be subject to unrestricted cuts are many that serve the low-income population, such as education, housing, and employment and training programs.

(Continued on page 7)

School Vouchers: Who Would Benefit?

by Edwin Dorn

(The author is a deputy director of research at the Joint Center.)

This past fall the Reagan administration drafted legislation for a school voucher program. Tentatively entitled The Equity and Choice Act of 1985, the proposed bill states that the purposes of vouchers are

> to improve the educational achievement of educationally deprived children by expanding opportunities for their parents to choose schools that best meet their needs, to foster diversity and competition among school programs for educationally deprived children, [and] to increase private sector involvement in providing educational programs for educationally deprived children.

Basically, the proposal would change the way the federal government spends the $3 billion available for educationally disadvantaged children under Chapter 1 of the 1981 Education Consolidation and Improvement Act (formerly Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act). Currently, the funds are spent to help those educationally disadvantaged children who attend public schools that offer compensatory education programs. Of the roughly 10 million educationally disadvantaged children in the United States, approximately half do not receive Chapter 1 assistance—partly because they are not enrolled in schools offering the compensatory services.

Vouchers would enable Chapter 1 monies to be used in a variety of ways. Parents would no longer have to keep their children in the schools where they are currently enrolled. Instead, theoretically, parents could take the vouchers (which would have cash value) and use them to help defray the costs of enrolling their children in another public school in the same district, in a public school in another district, or in a private or parochial school that offers programs for the educationally disadvantaged.

Much of the debate about the administration's proposal involves the Constitutional question of the separation of church and state. Indeed, the administration's voucher proposal could allow the circumventing of the U.S. Supreme Court's 1985 *Aguilar* decision, which prevents the use of Chapter 1 funds in parochial schools. The two questions likely to be particularly pertinent to *Focus* readers, however, are the following:

- Will such a program actually improve the options available to the parents of educationally disadvantaged children?
- Does the proposal have civil rights implications? (A frequent complaint about the voucher plan is that it will permit the use of federal funds in "segregation academies," schools created to avoid the Supreme Court's desegregation mandates.)

A Viable Option?

The administration estimates that the average value of a voucher will be about $600. It derives this figure by dividing the $3 billion compensatory education budget by the approximately 5 million children who participate. But the way in which Chapter 1 monies are spent depends on where one lives, so this average figure obscures a very broad range of actual expenditures, from a high of $1,100 per child in Alaska to a low of about $280 in California. Similarly, the real value of a voucher would vary by state. Further, as was suggested earlier, the number of children who receive compensatory education services has been restricted because of the ways in which the funds are allocated. If the funds were no longer tied to specific schools, the number of eligible students would grow, thereby greatly reducing the value of a voucher—to as little as $150 in California.

The estimated average cost of a voucher must be related to another figure: the average cost of an elementary school education. The average per pupil cost of a *public* school education is $3,000 a year, and public schools charge parents who live (and pay taxes) in another school district various amounts for educating their children. Many high-quality private schools charge much more than public schools do. (Many, of course, charge less.) A poor parent who has an average-value $600 voucher would have to make up the difference.

Parents who could come up with the additional hundreds or thousands of dollars needed to take advantage of the vouchers would then confront another problem: the proposed legislation would not require districts or schools to accept educationally disadvantaged children from other districts or schools. A poor parent in Washington, D.C., for example, might identify a potentially ideal school for his or her child in Fairfax County, Virginia. But if the school refused to accept the student, the parent's option would not be a viable one.

Thus, vouchers are not likely to enhance options greatly for large numbers of parents, and the administration's claims for the proposal are probably exaggerated. But if this is so, then one of the alleged evils of vouchers is probably also exaggerated: the program is not likely to lead to a massive abandonment of the public schools.

Support for Segregation Academies?

Nearly one-half of the language in the administration's proposal is devoted to the subject of "nondiscrimination by private schools." This amount of attention to civil rights is encouraging, at first glance. A careful reading of the text, however, suggests that the proposal was crafted to protect segregated private schools from unwanted interference.

The draft bill declares that "vouchers do not constitute Federal financial assistance" to private schools. This language permits circumvention of Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which prohibits federal monies from going to any program or institution that practices discrimination.

Further, the draft bill appears to protect segregated private schools from close scrutiny by the Internal Revenue Service. This is important because only schools that have been given tax-exempt status by the

(Continued on page 7)

The King We Should Remember

(Continued from page 3)

have a system where some people live in superfluous, inordinate wealth, while others live in abject, deadening poverty."

The attempt of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) in 1966 to build a successful urban movement in Chicago further impressed upon King how much more intractable America's economic inequalities were than her racial mores. "There are few things more thoroughly sinful than economic injustice," King told one audience, and regrettably, "large segments of white society are more concerned about tranquility and the status quo than about justice and humanity." To his aides, King spoke of the need to raise "class issues," issues "that relate to the privileged as over against the underprivileged." Part of America's problem, King knew, was that billions of dollars were being spent to wage Lyndon Johnson's neo-colonial war in Vietnam rather than fight the war on poverty in America. King decried America's involvement in Vietnam in exceptionally harsh language throughout early 1967. Even so, from then until his death, his primary concern remained how to devise a program and a strategy for bringing about a revolutionary economic transformation of American society. "We have moved from the era of civil rights to the era of human rights," he told one SCLC staff retreat, "an era where we are called upon to raise certain basic questions about the whole society."

King wistfully realized that up until 1965, "we really thought we were making great progress. . . . We somehow felt that we were going to win the total victory, before we analyzed the depths and dimensions of the problem." Civil rights until 1965 had been "a reform movement, . . . but after Selma and the voting rights bill we moved into a new era, which must be an era of revolution." What America required was "a radical redistribution of economic and political power," whereby "the whole structure of American life must be changed." By August 1967, therefore, King was calling for a program of mass civil disobedience to disrupt Washington and other major cities in order to force the federal government to provide jobs or income for all needy Americans. The aim of this march on Washington would not be "to have a beautiful day," as in August 1963, but to begin a revolutionary transformation—and not integration—of American life. "Let us therefore not think of our movement as one that seeks to integrate the Negro into all the existing values of American society," he stressed to his SCLC aides. King's assassination on April 4, 1968, in Memphis prevented him from bringing that project—the Poor People's Campaign—to the radical fruition he had been envisioning throughout the final months of his life.

Thus, the remarkable orator of that 1963 march and the successful reform leader who desegregated public facilities and opened up the South's ballot boxes between 1955 and 1965 should not be the only Martin Luther King, Jr., whom we commemorate. Americans need to be reminded of King's later life and message. That message is challenging rather than reassuring, and is acutely discomforting to those who would prefer to make Martin Luther King, Jr., into a safely mythical American hero rather than struggle with the profound present-day implications of his unfulfilled political agenda.

A Movement of Many

A celebration of King's legacy, however, requires more than simply a truthful appreciation of his fundamentally radical ideas. It also requires a straightforward acknowledgment that, as long-time activist Ella Baker has accurately said, "The movement made Martin rather than Martin making the movement." To emphasize that a proper appreciation for King's contributions requires us also to celebrate the valuable work of others is not to show disregard for King; indeed, during his own lifetime King as much as anyone stressed that his role in the movement was only one modest piece of a much larger mosaic. From Montgomery onward, he willingly accepted the position of public spokesman for and representative of thousands of others who never received media acclaim. The initial organizers of the Montgomery boycott—Jo Ann Gibson Robinson, Mary Fair Burks, and E. D. Nixon, among others—were people whose names even now are known only to friends and scholars, not the general public. Likewise, the invaluable contributions of most of the South's staunchest activists—people like Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee workers Robert Parris Moses, Diane Nash, and Charles Sherrod, or Selma's Amelia Boynton Robinson and Marie Foster—are known only to careful students of the movement. Even some of King's closest colleagues and advisors—Fred Shuttlesworth, Ralph Abernathy, Bayard Rustin, and Stanley Levison—have never received appropriate public recognition, although others, like Andrew Young, are deservedly major public figures.

During the 1960s, many local movements repeatedly implored King to visit *their* town. "Everybody wanted Dr. King more involved in wherever they were," Virginia's Reverend Milton Reid recalls, "because we saw this as really a Messiah type, that would inspire people; it would bring about change." King appreciated how his prophetic oratory and the church-based appeal of the southern civil rights movement could move hundreds of listeners to commit themselves to activism in ways they never had before, but he openly regretted people's presuming that efforts could take place *only if* Martin Luther King, Jr., came to town. Too much emphasis on the inspirational value of a single symbolic leader, King realized, could be immobilizing instead of stimulating, for he simply could not be everywhere at once. If local activists were conditioned to await the great man's presence, probably less mobilization would take place than if people committed themselves to moving ahead on their own, under indigenous leadership.

That same danger, or perhaps even a greater one, lies in celebrating King's birthday without setting him in a fuller context and seeing his contributions as part of a far larger human tableau. Any account of the civil rights movement that focuses excessively on one individual would not only ignore or distort the roles of others, creating a misunderstanding of our history; it would also, implicitly or explicitly, convey the message that singularly great individuals are a prerequisite to meaningful change.

Nothing could be more wrong, or more harmful, than the belief that significant initiatives must wait upon the emergence of an oratorically-skilled symbolic leader such as King. Harvard educator Charles Willie, one of King's 1948 classmates at Morehouse College, has beautifully articulated the danger:

> By idolizing those whom we honor, we do a disservice both to them and to ourselves. By exalting the accomplishments of Martin Luther King, Jr., into a legendary tale that is annually told, we fail to recognize his humanity—his personal and public struggles—that are similar to yours and mine. By idolizing those whom we honor, we fail to realize that we could go and do likewise.

Or, as Diane Nash says, "If people think it was Martin Luther King's movement, then today they—young people—are more likely to say, 'Gosh, I wish we had a Martin Luther King here today to lead us.' . . . If people knew how that movement started, then the question they would ask themselves is, 'What can I do?'"

School Vouchers: Who Would Benefit?

(Continued from page 5)

IRS will be able to participate in the voucher program. For the past dozen years, no school that practices discrimination has been eligible for tax-exempt status. But the administration's proposal would alter the role of the IRS in supporting nondiscrimination laws. To escape IRS scrutiny, virtually all a school would need to do is publish a statement claiming that it does not discriminate. Specifically, a school would be eligible to participate in the voucher program if it "includes in any published bylaws, advertisements, admission application forms, and other published materials a statement that it does not discriminate against student applicants or students on the basis of race." It was under such a lax nondiscrimination enforcement standard that the IRS, this past summer, granted tax-exempt status to Prince Edward Academy, a private school in Virginia created expressly to provide education to those seeking to avoid desegregated schools.

To render a school ineligible to participate in the proposed voucher program, one would need to show beyond a shadow of a doubt that the school practices discrimination, and one would need to show this using the administration's criteria. One criterion is whether a school has discriminated against a specific student within the previous year. That a school is known far and wide as a segregation academy and that it has never admitted a black student would be virtually irrelevant. In the administration's language, "the term 'racially discriminatory policy' shall not include failure of any institution to pursue or achieve any . . . racial representation in the student body."

Finally, the administration's proposal would institute a major shift in enforcement practice. *Only* the Attorney General of the United States would have authority "to investigate and to determine whether a private eligible educational institution is following a racially discriminatory policy." Under the 1964 Civil Rights Act, a parent who thinks his or her child has been discriminated against has two courses of action: suing the school directly, or requesting federal intervention. The administration's proposal omits the first option. A parent who wanted to press a charge of discrimination would therefore need to secure support from the attorney general, that is, from Edwin Meese.

Many Americans believe that poor parents should have the same range of choices that middle-class parents have and that a more competitive environment might lead many public schools to raise their standards and improve their offerings. On these grounds, the use of vouchers or other devices to improve educational options is commendable.

The administration's voucher proposal, however, would fall far short of serving its stated purposes. Very few educationally disadvantaged children would benefit from it, and in the end, the proposal's most pronounced effect would be to reduce civil rights enforcement, not to enhance educational opportunities for disadvantaged children.

Taxes, the Budget, and the Poor

(Continued from page 4)

At this point we do not know definitely which cuts will be necessary and which programs will be hit hardest. What we do know is that the deficit reduction act requires the budget deficit for fiscal year 1986 to be no more than $171.9 billion. On February 1 of this year the president is required to issue an order (effective March 1) to eliminate any "excess deficit"—the amount by which the deficit for fiscal year 1986 will exceed $171.9 billion. The president's order is to be based on a report by the General Accounting Office identifying the estimated excess deficit for FY 1986 and the percentage reductions that will be necessary in each program account to eliminate it.

Preliminary reports suggest that the 1986 budget deficit will be $220 billion; thus, the "excess deficit" may be as high as $50 billion. In this first year of Gramm-Rudman-Hollings, however, the law limits total cuts to $11.7 billion. So the president's order will probably include cuts for this amount rather than for the entire "excess" over $171.9 billion.

Although the direct effect on cash and in-kind (transfer) payments of either the tax bill or Gramm-Rudman-Hollings will be small, the indirect effect may be large. To eliminate the possibility of an "excess deficit" in the first place, the president or Congress may cut transfer programs. They might do this if, for example, they wanted to ensure that a more-favored program would not be subject to automatic cuts. This is particularly likely to happen if tax reform does not result in a major increase in revenues to finance the budget.

The struggle over the budget and the budget deficit promises to be a wrenching one in the months and years to come. Whatever choices are made will have serious implications for us all, and particularly for those who live in poverty.

(Editor's Note: The February issue of *Focus* will contain a special supplement on tax reform, prepared by Dr. Burbridge.)

Telescope

New Joint Center Publication on Black Economic Progress

A new JCPS publication, *Trends, Prospects, and Strategies for Black Economic Progress,* by economist Andrew Brimmer, examines recent trends in employment and income for blacks and for whites and trends in income distribution within the black community. The author also identifies a combination of private initiatives and public policies that he believes will improve the economic status of blacks.

In his foreword to *Trends, Prospects, and Strategies,* Joint Center President Eddie N. Williams says: "Too often, the debate [on how to remedy blacks' economic problems] is polarized by arguments either for increasing governmental assistance or for almost totally eliminating it. In this study, noted economist Andrew Brimmer strikes a much needed balance. . . . Instead of painting a picture in pure black and white, he suggests a blending of strategies, some calling for less reliance on the federal government, others requiring a strengthening of the nation's wavering commitment to affirmative action."

Dr. Brimmer is president of Brimmer and Company, Inc., an economic and financial consulting firm based in Washington, D.C. He is also a former member of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.

Copies are available for $5.95 each from the Joint Center.

JCPS and Miller Brewing Company Unveil Paintings of Famous Black Politicians

The Joint Center and Miller Brewing Company are co-hosting the unveiling of a portrait tribute to blacks who have been prominent in the political arena. The "Gallery of Greats: Black Political Firsts" collection, painted by Colorado Springs artist Clarence Shivers, will be introduced at the Sheraton Grand Hotel in Washington, D.C., on February 18, 1986. Miller Brewing Company plans to display the portraits on Capitol Hill and at Howard University for four weeks and then send them on a multi-year national tour.

The portraits honor 12 men and women who blazed trails in public service. The 12 include Mary McLeod Bethune, who in 1936 was named the first black woman adviser to the U.S. National Youth Administration; Robert N. C. Nix, Jr., who in 1984 became the first black chief justice of a state Supreme Court; and former U.S. Senator Edward W. Brooke, who was elected to the Senate 20 years ago.

Shivers, who was one of the original Tuskegee Airmen—a highly skilled group of black World War II fighter pilots—has painted since childhood and has won many awards. In 1983, his "Gallery of Greats" collection featured 12 oil portraits honoring civil rights leaders. In 1977, his painting "Portrait of a Great American," honoring Martin Luther King, was included in Sidney Poitier's film *A Piece of the Action.*

Ford Foundation President to Speak at JCPS Dinner

Franklin A. Thomas, president and chief executive officer of the Ford Foundation, will be the featured speaker at the Joint Center's ninth annual dinner, to be held March 26, 1986, at the Washington Hilton Hotel. John J. Creedon, president and chief executive officer of Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, is the national chairman of the dinner. U.S. Congressman William H. Gray III (PA), who chairs the Budget Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives, is chairman of the general dinner committee.

Members of the dinner advisory committee are Thornton F. Bradshaw, chairman of RCA Corporation; Charles L. Brown, chairman of AT&T; John Filer, former chairman of Aetna Life and Casualty Company; Douglas A. Fraser, former president of the United Auto Workers; Clifton C. Garvin, chairman of Exxon Corporation; Reginald H. Jones, former chairman of General Electric Company; Robert E. Kirby, former chairman of Westinghouse Electric Corporation; Lane Kirkland, president of the AFL-CIO; George Weissman, chairman of the executive committee of Philip Morris, Inc.; and Jerome B. Wiesner, president emeritus of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Tickets for the dinner are now available. Sponsors' tables of 10 cost $5,000; patrons' tables of 10 cost $2,000; and individual tickets cost $200. Reservations may be made with Alfreda Edwards at 202-626-3555.

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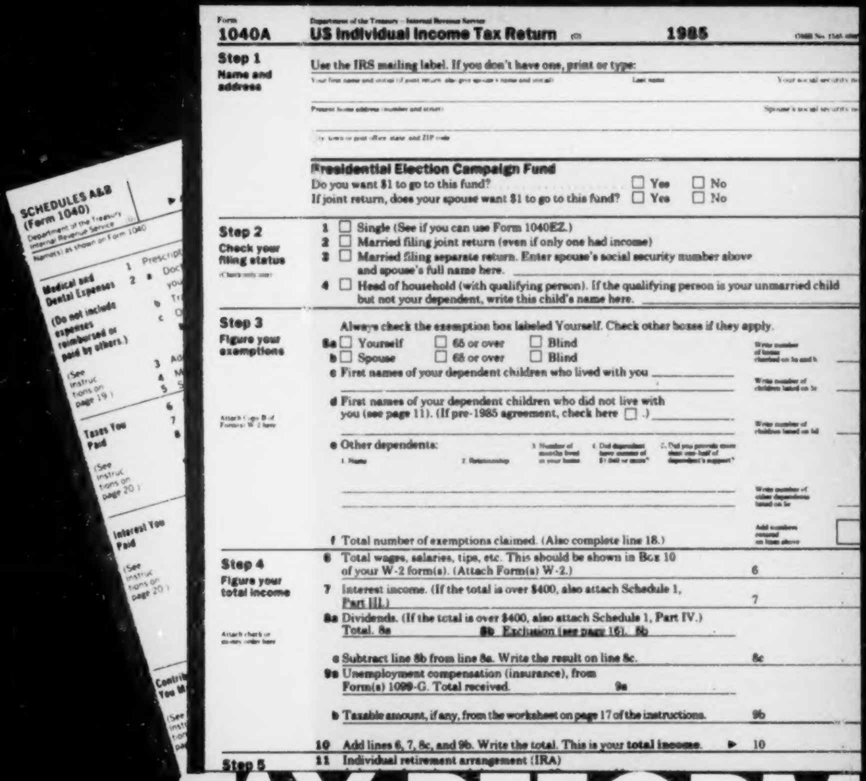

Form
1040A — **US Individual Income Tax Return** — **1985**

Step 1 **Name and address**

Use the IRS mailing label. If you don't have one, print or type:

Presidential Election Campaign Fund

Do you want $1 to go to this fund? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If joint return, does your spouse want $1 to go to this fund? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Step 2 **Check your filing status**

1 ☐ Single (See if you can use Form 1040EZ.)

2 ☐ Married filing joint return (even if only one had income)

3 ☐ Married filing separate return. Enter spouse's social security number above and spouse's full name here.

4 ☐ Head of household (with qualifying person). If the qualifying person is your unmarried child but not your dependent, write this child's name here.

Step 3 **Figure your exemptions**

Always check the exemption box labeled Yourself. Check other boxes if they apply.

5a ☐ Yourself ☐ 65 or over ☐ Blind

b ☐ Spouse ☐ 65 or over ☐ Blind

c First names of your dependent children who lived with you

d First names of your dependent children who did not live with you (see page 11). (If pre-1985 agreement, check here ☐ .)

e Other dependents:

f Total number of exemptions claimed. (Also complete line 18.)

Step 4 **Figure your total income**

6 Total wages, salaries, tips, etc. This should be shown in Box 10 of your W-2 form(s). (Attach Form(s) W-2.) 6

7 Interest income. (If the total is over $400, also attach Schedule 1, Part III.) 7

8a Dividends. (If the total is over $400, also attach Schedule 1, Part IV.) Total. 8a 8b Exclusion (see page 16). 8b

c Subtract line 8b from line 8a. Write the result on line 8c. 8c

9a Unemployment compensation (insurance), from Form(s) 1099-G. Total received. 9a

b Taxable amount, if any, from the worksheet on page 17 of the instructions. 9b

10 Add lines 6, 7, 8c, and 9b. Write the total. This is your **total income**. ▶ 10

Step 5 11 Individual retirement arrangement (IRA)

SCHEDULES A&B (Form 1040)
Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service

Name(s) as shown on Form 1040

Medical and Dental Expenses
(Do not include expenses reimbursed or paid by others.)
(See instructions on page 19.)

Taxes You Paid
(See instructions on page 20.)

Interest You Paid
(See instructions on page 20.)

TAX REFORM

How It Affects Blacks

The Crisis in Black America

Can we create a consensus for change?

Pollution and Black Neighborhoods

Are black areas becoming the dumping grounds of the nation?

ISSN 0740-0195

Joint Center for Political Studies

Perspective

This year Black History Month follows the first official, national celebration of Martin Luther King's birthday. From now on we will have two consecutive months at the beginning of each year to focus the nation's attention on the accomplishments and status of black Americans.

In addition to accentuating the King holiday, this year Black History Month has special significance for me. Its theme is "The Afro-American Experience. The International Connection." My career began in international relations, first with the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee and later with the U.S. Department of State.

My nine-year experience in the international arena was both exciting and disappointing: exciting because my assignments were challenging and rewarding; disappointing because there were so few black Americans in this field. There are more today, but blacks still are grossly underrepresented in America's foreign policy establishment.

The underrepresentation extends far beyond the State Department and its sister agencies. Blacks are relatively few in those segments of academia, business, and the nonprofit sector that are linked to foreign affairs. Except for a limited degree of involvement in African and Caribbean matters, black participation in the international arena is virtually nil. The reasons are varied and complex.

Columbia University anthropologist Elliott Skinner, who is black and a former Ambassador to Upper Volta, provides some insight into blacks' absence from foreign affairs. He observes, "The ability of any group to influence its country's foreign policy is directly related to its ability to influence that country's domestic affairs."

Another reason is that only a few blacks view foreign affairs as a viable professional option, and therefore only a handful train for such a career and seek it. Entrance requirements for the Foreign Service are also said to be set unnecessarily high in order to maintain an elitist environment. And, of course, there is always the specter of racial discrimination.

Whatever the reasons for black underrepresentation in foreign affairs, it must not continue. Blacks themselves must exert greater initiative in challenging the status quo and in competing for opportunities that can yield exciting and rewarding careers. We also must pay closer attention to the foreign policies of our government, especially those that have serious implications for the social and economic condition of blacks in this country and for struggling nations with whom we empathize.

Despite the Joint Center's heavy emphasis on domestic affairs, we recognize the powerful impact of international events on what does or does not happen in the United States. Energy, international trade, the exporting of jobs by American multi-national corporations, and defense policies strike close to home. Thus, for the past few years, the Joint Center has conducted several programs in the international sphere: we have published studies on foreign trade and on blacks in foreign affairs and have established a clearinghouse on blacks in the military. Senior State Department and Defense Department officers are regularly assigned to the Joint Center as Fellows who conduct research and interact with black leaders and organizations.

In April we will convene a series of round table discussions that will help shed additional light on the role of blacks in foreign affairs. These discussions, involving experts from academe, government, and industry, will examine in depth "The influence of Ethnocentrism on U.S. Foreign Policy" (see *Focus*, November-December 1985).

Those programs and others currently on the drawing board will become the centerpiece of greater Joint Center involvement in the international arena. We will emphasize what we have always considered part of our mission: the importance and urgency of black participation in the shaping and implementation of American policies—at home *and* abroad.

Eddie N. Williams
President

FOCUS

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Pollution and Black Neighborhoods

by Robert D. Bullard

(The author is associate professor of sociology at Texas Southern University in Houston.)

In 1978, several dangerous chemicals were found to be leaking from an abandoned dumpsite along the Love Canal in Niagara Falls, New York. Placed in the site more than 25 years earlier, the chemicals were seeping into the basements and yards of homes surrounding the site. People living in the area were subsequently found to suffer significantly more from several health problems—miscarriages, birth defects, liver damage—than did people in the general population.

The Love Canal episode sounded an alarm. Ever since then, communities have been scrambling to find—and get government help in cleaning up—sites within their borders where toxic material was inadequately disposed of in years past. Communities have also been much more careful about where and how they dispose of current municipal waste. And the disposal of hazardous industrial waste is now regulated, to some extent, by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

For the most part, however, the communities most able to control the disposal of waste within their neighborhoods are white middle- and upper-middle-income communities that have organized effectively. Blacks, in general, have not used their growing political clout to influence or challenge policy decisions on environmental issues. Instead, they have chosen to focus their attention on the social issues that they believe have a more direct bearing on their well-being—for example, jobs and education.

However, black communities can no longer afford to remain indifferent to environmental issues. Because of where they live and work, blacks tend to be subjected to disproportionately large amounts of pollution. In the North, many blacks live in central city neighborhoods, where industry is generally more concentrated than in the suburbs (bringing more industrial pollution) and where freeways tend to border the community (bringing more vehicular pollution). In the South, according to a study funded by the National Science Foundation (one segment of which was published in 1985 with the title *Man-Environment Interactions in Selected Southern Cities*), black neighborhoods in a number of major cities have been burdened with a disproportionately large share of pollution. Moreover, blacks in the South often live in outlying areas, which are precisely the most likely locations for disposal of hazardous waste products. Occupationally, blacks are heavily concentrated in blue-collar jobs, which means they work in the very industries that use hazardous materials.

Disposal of Municipal Waste

Municipal waste is the trash that all of us dispose of in our offices and homes. The amount of municipal waste we produce is enough to fill the New Orleans Superdome from floor to ceiling twice a day, every day. Each American consumer produces about 3.5 pounds of waste per day, and together we produce over 148 million metric tons annually.

Municipal waste also includes certain waste products of industry that are primarily nontoxic; small amounts of potentially toxic industrial substances, however, may also be included in municipal waste.

There are two official ways and one unofficial way to dispose of municipal waste. Officially, it can be dumped in a properly engineered hole and covered properly with dirt—the hole is called a sanitary (or municipal) landfill—or it can be incinerated under properly controlled conditions. Unofficially (illegally), municipal waste can be dropped off at a dumpsite, which is a nontechnical term meaning an unregulated facility.

Finding land where municipal garbage can be disposed of is increasingly difficult, especially in large metropolitan areas. Residents of every community want their garbage collected, but all of them want it disposed of somewhere other than near their homes. A landfill is considered an undesirable feature to have in a community—and it may be dangerous. Either inadvertently or illegally, health-threatening substances may end up in a landfill. And small amounts of substances that are toxic when concentrated in large quantities are regularly disposed of at landfills (as we explain in the next section).

Black communities can no longer afford to remain indifferent to environmental issues. Because of where they live and work, blacks tend to be subjected to disproportionately large amounts of pollution.

Normally, zoning regulations require that landfills be located in areas zoned for industrial use, not in areas zoned residential. But not in Houston. Houston is the only large American city without zoning, and the city's black neighborhoods have emerged as the dumping ground for the city's municipal waste. Six of the city's eight garbage incinerators are located in predominantly black neighborhoods, as are all five of the city-owned municipal landfills. Unofficially, therefore, the city of Houston appears to have "zoned" its black neighborhoods as compatible with city-owned solid waste disposal sites. Once the city had established that pattern, private waste disposal firms continued it.

In 1979 black organizations filed a lawsuit in protest; the judge ruled against them, and they were turned down on appeal. Their suit, however, did produce one change: the state Department of Health—the licensing agency for city-owned landfills—now takes economic and socio-demographic data into account before granting a permit for a landfill.

Disposal of Hazardous Waste

Municipal landfills accept primarily waste from the home. Hazardous landfills, in contrast, are areas designated legally and technically capable of accepting toxic waste—that is, byproducts from chemical industries. Finding suitable sites for these landfills has become an especially critical problem, since people everywhere are reluctant to live near such potential time bombs. That there is a problem, however, is clear from the figures presented by the Office of Technology Assessment (a research component of Congress) in its 1983

(Continued on page 9)

The Crisis in Black America

by Glenn C. Loury

(The author, an economist, is a member of the faculty of the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. He is spending this year at the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton. The article below was adapted from a speech Professor Loury made to the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., on December 17, 1985.)

Today black Americans, and the nation, face a racial crisis different in kind—but not in degree—from the crisis that occasioned the civil rights revolution. The bottom stratum of the black community is profoundly alienated from mainstream American life. But the deprivation, misery, hopelessness, and despair of the ghetto can no longer be blamed solely on white racism; they will not yield to protest marches or court orders; and they have steadily worsened in the years since the civil rights movement triumphed.

The social pathology that afflicts the urban underclass poses an enormous challenge to the leadership of both the black community and the nation. Yet we seem increasingly unable to conduct fruitful public dialogue—the kind of public discourse from which could emerge a political consensus broad enough to support sustained action on this most pressing domestic problem.

The result is a stalemate of sorts. Neither the government nor blacks have been moved to act in their respective spheres. The Reagan administration has not thought it necessary to formulate any explicit policy engaging the problems of the ghetto—or even to devote serious reflection to those problems. And black leaders have not fully recognized that a people who languish in dependency while the means through which they might work for their own advancement are at hand have surrendered their claim to dignity and to the respect of their fellow citizens.

Black America today is facing a great, existential challenge—the challenge of taking control of our own futures by exerting the requisite moral leadership, sacrificing time and resources, and building the needed institutions so that black social and economic development may be advanced. No matter what the white liberals and conservatives say to each other in debating the proper role of the government in matters of race, ultimately only blacks can meet this self-creating challenge. Black America's political leaders, it seems to me, have too often failed to face up to this fact, and the breakdown in public discourse has made the responsibility of facing up to it that much easier to evade.

Breakdown in Discourse

Public dialogue on racial issues is dominated by two diametrically opposed themes. One is that the ghettos' problems are the fault of racism and are, therefore, a civil rights problem, curable by civil rights methods. The other is that everything is due to the follies of big government and big spending.

Each position has some merit, yet each also has devastating weaknesses—and each side's weaknesses undercut its own strengths and help lend credibility to the other side.

The advocates of the first position—represented by the civil rights lobby—have exploited the racial situation for their own political gain. To them, every attack on a welfare program, whether the program can be defended as cost effective or not, is evidence of racism. Every affirmative action effort, whether its aim is to train the ghetto poor in job skills or to secure a fat municipal procurement contract for a black millionaire, is a necessary and just recompense. They have cited the minority youth unemployment rate in defense of special admissions programs to elite law schools. They have pilloried as racists those who take the opposite side of legitimately arguable policy questions.

Many whites, genuinely concerned about the tragedy unfolding in our inner cities, are reluctant to engage the issue because it seems like a political quagmire where one is forced to ally oneself with a civil rights establishment that no longer commands broad respect.

The social pathology that afflicts the urban underclass poses an enormous challenge to the leadership of both the black community and the nation.

In contrast, those who believe the problems of the ghettos are the legacy of a tragically misconceived welfare state—a position represented by the current administration—show no awareness whatsoever of the explicitly racial character of the ghettos' problems. They do not seem to understand the historical experiences that link the current urban underclass, symbolically and sociologically, to our long, painful legacy of racial trauma. The administration has dealt with the issue of continuing racial inequality merely by promulgating a de facto doctrine of "benign neglect." Its spokesmen talk in formalistic terms about the principle of "color-blind state action." They muster greater public relations skills to defend segregation academies than to convince black Americans that addressing this life-threatening condition is one of the government's highest domestic priorities. To them, the "trickling down" of the benefits of economic growth is what will ultimately solve the ghettos' problems.

Many people agree with the administration that the Great Society approach to the problems of poor blacks has been inadequate and that helping people is not nearly as easy to do as the big spenders would suggest. But those same people see no excuse for the government's failure to engage the problem of the ghettos with the requisite seriousness and energy. In fact, the administration's lack of a positive, high-priority response to the problem of the ghettos makes many of the people who accept much of the conservative critique of social policy reluctant to criticize the civil rights lobby, lest the critics be identified with the administration on racial matters.

(Continued on page 10)

How Tax Reform Affects Blacks

Too often, public policy debates seem to be conducted by elites—politicians and journalists using jargon to speculate on what is best for the nation. But the nation is made up of people—you and me and more than 200 million more of us—who rarely have an opportunity to participate directly in the important public decisions that affect our lives. And if some of us happen to be members of a minority group, we have an even harder time making our voices heard.

One of the issues now at the top of the American political agenda is tax reform. But although practically everyone agrees that basic changes need to be made in the American tax system, no one knows how the changes will affect him or her individually.

In preparation for an upcoming public forum on the issue of tax reform, the Domestic Policy Association drew up a combined issue-book and discussion guide entitled *Taxes: Who Should Pay and Why?* The Joint Center prepared a companion piece entitled *Tax Reform and Its Implications for Blacks*. A condensed and adopted version of the Joint Center's report is provided here for the benefit of *Focus* readers. (The center also prepared a discussion of welfare policy and its implications for minorities. That paper will appear in the March issue of *Focus*.)

It is our sincere hope that the concept of broader citizen involvement in the shaping of public policy will grow and that our contribution here will stimulate others to a fuller exercise of their most powerful democratic rights, not the least of which is freedom of speech.

Eddie N. Williams
President

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by Lynn Burbridge

(The author, an economist, is a research associate at the Joint Center.)

Currently Congress is considering some sweeping tax reform proposals. All taxpayers will be affected—individuals and businesses, rich families and poor, blacks and whites. And the effects on blacks will probably be different from the effects on whites.

To learn how any tax law may affect blacks and whites differently, one needs to answer three questions:

- *How does the law affect the taxes of black and other low-income families in comparison with the taxes of higher income families?* Average black family income has never been much more than 60 percent of average white family income, and the gap between blacks and whites is particularly large at the lowest end of the income scale.
- *Does the law have special provisions that black and white families, even when they have similar incomes, will not be able to take equal advantage of?* A special provision is anything that lets certain taxpayers reduce the taxes they might otherwise have to pay. Special provisions frequently single out investments in certain kinds of property or the receipt of specific kinds of income.
- *Will the law generate enough revenue to pay for the social programs that benefit black and low-income families?*

The law's effects on families with *different* levels of income and on different families with the *same* level of income are direct; the law's effect on total revenue is indirect.

With our three questions in mind, we will examine the most recent major tax reform law—the Economic Recovery and Tax Act of 1981 (ERTA). We will then examine the tax reform proposal recently put forward by the Ways and Means Committee of the House of Representatives. First, though, we will compare ERTA's effects on the tax burden of blacks with its effects on the tax burden of whites. Tax burden is the percentage of before-tax income that one pays out in taxes; it reflects both the law's treatment of different income levels (our first question) and the law's approach to special provisions (our second question).

ERTA's Differential Effects on Tax Burden

Ronald Reagan pushed tax revision early in his first term, and the law Congress passed in 1981 was touted for reducing the taxes paid by all citizens. The law did reduce tax *rates* for all taxpayers, but this did not necessarily translate into a reduction in actual taxes paid or in tax burden.

One reason is that inflation pushed many families—and especially low-income families—into higher tax brackets, counteracting the impact of the cut in rates. Another reason is that very low-income families did not receive the same relief from taxation that they had received during most of the 1970s. Finally, high-income families enjoyed not only the same across-the-board cuts in the tax rates on earned income that everyone else did, but they also benefited from significant reductions in the rates on investment income. This is a type of income that most poor families (and many black families at every income level) do not receive in large amounts.

Census data make it clear that ERTA's effect on the tax burden of blacks was different from its effect on the tax burden of whites.

Census data make it clear that ERTA's effect on the tax burden of blacks was different from its effect on the tax burden of whites. Table 1 presents the Census estimates of (1) mean income before taxes, (2) mean income after taxes, and (3) tax burden, for both blacks and whites, during the period from 1980 (the year before ERTA) to 1983.

The data show that whites consistently had higher before- and after-tax incomes than blacks. And, given the progressivity of the tax structure (i.e., the fact that people with higher incomes pay at higher tax rates), whites also had larger average tax burdens. The estimates also show that during the period in question, the tax burden declined for both blacks and whites.

But the decline was much greater for whites than for blacks. This suggests that blacks paid an increased proportion of total tax revenue, relative to whites. Furthermore, the taxes paid by whites evidently decreased enough to make up for the decrease in white before-tax income that resulted from the recession of 1981-1982. This did not happen with blacks. The before-tax income of blacks did decline as a result of the recession; but their after-tax income went down between 1980 and 1983, whereas the after-tax income of whites rose.

Table 1. Mean Before-Tax Income, Mean After-Tax Income, and Tax Burden, by Race, 1980-1983

	1980	1981	1982	1983	Percentage Change 1980-1983*
Mean Before-Tax Income†					
Whites	$21,913	$21,505	$21,600	$21,885	−0.1%
Blacks	13,970	13,457	13,444	13,675	−0.2
Mean After-Tax Income†					
Whites	$16,852	$16,437	$16,738	$17,166	1.9%
Blacks	11,450	10,945	11,060	11,311	−1.2
Tax Burden (Mean Taxes as Percentage of Mean Before-Tax Income					
Whites	23.1%	23.6%	22.5%	21.6%	−6.5%
Blacks	18.0	18.7	17.7	17.3	−3.9

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, "After-Tax Money Income Estimate of Households," Series P-23, Nos. 132, 137, and 143.

* The absolute change from 1980 to 1983 was divided by (or taken as a percentage of) the 1980 figure (as the base amount).

† Adjusted for inflation. Incomes for 1981-1983 are given in 1980 dollars.

These estimates suggest that the differential impact of ERTA on the tax burdens of blacks and whites was caused by two factors operating simultaneously. Blacks suffered more from the recession than whites did (as the data on before-tax income indicate). Blacks also benefited less from the tax reform than whites did (as the data on tax burden and after-tax income indicate).

The reasons for these differential effects lie in ERTA's effects specifically on people at different levels of income and on special provisions in the tax law.

ERTA and Low-Income Families

For those with low incomes, one of the most noteworthy features of ERTA is not what it did, but what it failed to do. Unlike some previous tax reform bills, ERTA failed to make sure that people living in poverty did not have to pay taxes.

The "income tax threshold" (described below in detail) is the level of income below which one does not have to pay federal income tax. Between 1976 and 1981 Congress tried to keep that threshold set at the poverty level. As inflation systematically pushed the poverty level upward, Congress periodically adjusted the income tax threshold upward. In 1981, however, Congress did not make such an adjustment.

The income tax threshold has three components, which tax law treats as separate entities. One component is the *standard deduction, or zero bracket amount (ZBA),* that is applicable to everyone with any income at all. The ZBA is the amount of income that is tax free.

The second component of the income tax threshold is the *exemption* given to every person in a family or a taxpaying unit; this, too, is applicable to everyone, regardless of the family's total income. The larger the family, of course, the larger the total number of exemptions.

The third component of the income tax threshold is applicable only to families with children and an adjusted gross income of less than $11,000. Such families can claim an *earned income tax credit (EITC)*—a credit applicable, as its name suggests, only to earned income. The purpose of the EITC is to give poor people an incentive to work and to provide them with relief from social security taxes.

ERTA did not tie any of these three components of the income tax threshold to inflation. That is, none of the three components automatically increased with the rate of inflation. (The application of such automatic increases is referred to as indexing.) In the years following the passage of ERTA, therefore, although the level of income that was considered "poverty" kept rising with inflation, the standard deduction, the personal exemption, and the earned income tax credit remained at their 1980 levels.

In 1984, Congress acted to eliminate some of these inequities. The Deficit Reduction Act of 1984 provided that, beginning in 1985, both the zero bracket amount and the personal exemption would automatically increase with the rate of inflation. (The ZBA for 1985 goes from $2,300 to $2,390 for single returns and from $3,400 to $3,540 for joint returns. The personal exemption increases from $1,000 to $1,040.) The earned income tax credit was not indexed, but it, too, was increased. (The new maximum went from $500 to $550.)

According to a report by the Joint (Senate-House) Committee on Taxation, however, these changes were too little and too late. Indexing the ZBA and the personal exemption in 1985 did not make up for what had happened between 1980 and 1984, when neither of those levels rose with inflation; and the earned income tax credit is still not indexed at all.

ERTA, then, hurt low-income people by failing to index the components of the income tax threshold. And it hurt them in another way, as well: by failing to compensate for the impact of inflation on tax brackets. Inflation causes "bracket creep," which means that it pushes the taxpayer into a higher tax bracket, increasing the tax burden although there has been no increase in real (inflation-adjusted) income. All taxpayers have suffered from bracket creep, but lower-income families (or taxpayers) have suffered more than higher-income families (or taxpayers). Tax brackets are narrower at low levels of income than at high ones, so inflation pushes lower-income taxpayers into higher brackets more easily than it pushes higher-income taxpayers into higher brackets.

ERTA and Special Provisions

The total amount of taxable income determines the rate at which a person is taxed. That total, however, is made up of several parts, depending on source, and not all the parts have been treated alike by tax law. Special provisions apply to particular kinds of income or particular kinds of expenditures. The most significant change ERTA made to the special provisions affecting individuals had to do with income from investments.

For example, before ERTA, the law distinguished between earned income (wages and salaries) and investment income. The latter was taxed at a higher rate. ERTA equalized the tax rates on the two forms of income by lowering the rates on investment income. This reduced taxes sizably for the families most likely to have this source of income, notably, high-income families.

Census data for 1983 indicate that, except for wage and salary income, blacks and whites differed considerably in their sources of income.

The impact of ERTA, then, depended to some extent on the sources of a family's income (and on the investments the family made). And census data for 1983 indicate that, except for wage and salary income, blacks and whites differed considerably in their sources of income. Whites were much more likely to acquire income from self-employment, pension plans and annuities, and property (dividends, interest, rent, and royalties). Blacks were more likely to rely on public assistance.

Moreover, the differences between blacks and whites in sources of income persist even when blacks are compared with whites in similar income groups. In other words, a black household will probably own less property, and therefore receive less investment income, than a white household with the same income. This will be the case regardless of how high or low the income in the two households is (although usually the lower the income group, the larger the gap).

Given the basic differences between blacks and whites in sources of income, when rates on investment income are lowered, whites can be expected to benefit more than blacks. When rates on earned income are lowered, probably both groups will benefit about equally. ERTA, as we have said, lowered the rates on both investment income and earned income. It is important to note, however, that even when tax rates are reduced across the board (as they were under ERTA), in absolute terms the reduction is much greater for wealthier families; that is, 25 percent of $50,000 is much more money than 25 percent of $5,000 is.

To blacks and the poor, the crucial question is whether a tax reform bill will generate enough revenue to reduce the U.S. budget deficit.

We know very little about the amount and form of property held by race and level of income, and we know nothing about the extent to which blacks and whites differ in the advantage they take of different provisions in the tax law. Thus, the data given in Table 1 do not account for all the differences between black and white holdings of property, and they may in fact *underestimate* the degree to which ERTA has had different effects on blacks and whites. Estimates of black and white tax burdens that do not take this into account are, at best, presenting only the minimum differences that may exist between blacks and whites.

ERTA's Indirect Effect—Revenue Shortfalls

Many economists hold ERTA responsible for a dramatic growth in the budget deficit. By giving billions of dollars in tax cuts to business, it sharply decreased federal revenues. (Some economists also emphasize the roles of the 1981-1982 recession and the defense build-up in contributing to the growth of the deficit.) Concerned about the large deficit, Congress and the president have taken major steps to cut expenditures. The most dramatic of these actions has been the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings deficit reduction act.

The House Ways and Means Bill

Despite problems measuring the size of ERTA's differential impact on blacks and whites, the existence of such a differential impact, as we have seen, is beyond question. Therefore, more recent attempts to reform the tax system bear watching by those concerned with the well-being of blacks.

On November 23, 1985, the House Ways and Means Committee, chaired by Dan Rostenkowski (D-Ill.), finished writing the Tax Reform Act of 1985 (HR 3838). The bill passed the House on December 17, 1985, but faces an uncertain future in the Republican-controlled Senate, since many Republicans (and some Democrats) feel that too many tax incentives for investment in new businesses were eliminated. President Reagan has set a high priority on tax reform in his second term, so although he has some reservations about the House bill, he may persuade Senate Republicans to support some tax bill, if not the Ways and Means proposal.

One feature of the House bill is particularly relevant to blacks. The bill would raise the income tax threshold so that families below the poverty level would not have to pay any federal taxes. (Single individuals in poverty would still pay taxes, although less than before.)

Table 2 compares the three components of the income tax threshold—the standard deduction (formerly the zero bracket amount, or ZBA), the exemption for dependents, and the earned income tax credit—as they are under current law and as they would be if the House Ways and Means bill passed. Under the House bill, each of the components would be increased and indexed for inflation. Further, a new standard deduction would be created for single heads of household, with a dollar value between that for single individuals and that for married couples filing jointly. (At present, single heads of household have the same standard deduction as single individuals.) This should be of particular importance to blacks, given the large percentage of female-headed households in the black population.

Table 2 also shows how the House bill would revise the tax rate structure. For individuals, the 14 brackets currently in place would be reduced to 4; and the rates, which currently range from 11 percent to 50 percent, would become 15, 25, 35, and 38 percent. (Thus, the top rate for individuals would be lowered from 50 percent to 38 percent.) Moreover, these rates would be indexed for inflation. Even without indexing, however, "bracket creep" would be less of a problem than it is now, since the income range of each tax bracket would be much broader than under current law.

For corporate taxpayers, too, the number of brackets would be reduced (from 5 to 3), and the top tax rate would be lowered (from 46 percent to 36 percent).

A minimum tax rate of 25 percent would be set for both individuals and firms. Under current law, even though there is a minimum tax of 20 percent for individuals and 15 percent for corporations, so many loopholes exist that many taxpayers can avoid paying taxes altogether. The proposed bill attempts to eliminate these loopholes so that a minimum tax would definitely be paid.

The House bill would make other changes, as well, modifying the existing special provisions to bring more income into the tax base. (The tax base is the portion of total income that is subject to taxation.) For example, it would limit the use of various tax shelters, the deduction of business expenses, the deduction of interest payments (for mortgages and other nonbusiness expenses), and the issuance of tax-exempt government bonds. And some sources of income that are now wholly or partially exempt from taxes would be taxable: unemployment insurance, scholarships and fellowships (except payments for tuition and equipment), and prizes and awards. Finally, the way businesses depreciate their assets would be restricted, so that corporate taxpayers would have to pay more taxes.

The effect that these changes in special provisions would have on blacks is hard to assess, given the insufficiency of data. We can say, however, that people who do not itemize on their tax returns would benefit relative to people who do itemize. Blacks are probably more likely than whites to be non-itemizers, since blacks are less likely than whites to have business and property income (even when differences in income are taken into account). So these changes would probably benefit black taxpayers somewhat.

The members of the House Ways and Means Committee assert that their bill would still bring in the same tax revenues as before. According to the committee, the revenues lost with the lowering of taxes on individuals would be made up by increases in corporate, excise, estate, and gift taxes. (Increased taxes from businesses would have to come from the closing of various loopholes, for as we have seen, actual corporate tax rates would decline.)

If the Tax Reform Act of 1985 would not significantly decrease tax revenue, neither would it increase tax revenue. And to blacks and other low-income families, the amount of revenue generated may be as important as what happens to the income tax threshold and the tax rate. To blacks and the poor, the crucial question is whether a tax reform bill will generate enough revenue to reduce the U.S. budget deficit. An increasing deficit may eventually mean further cuts in domestic social programs, including those that are important to blacks and other low-income families. Too large a deficit could also impede economic growth, thus leading to even larger deficits in the future and additional cuts in social programs.

The current proposal does well in attempting to exclude poor families from taxation and in lowering the tax rates for many middle-class families. But in failing to increase revenue, it may undercut its own strengths. At the very least, the House bill is an important first step, and its movement toward passage should be closely watched.

Table 2. Comparison of Income Tax Threshold and Tax Rates, Current Tax Law and House Ways and Means Bill

	Current Law (1986)	House Ways and Means Bill
Income Tax Threshold		
Standard Deduction		
Single	$2,480 (indexed)	$2,950 (indexed)
Joint	$3,670 (indexed)	$4,800 (indexed)
Head of Household	$2,480 (indexed)	$4,200 (indexed)
Exemptions per Person	$1,080 (indexed)	$2,000; $1,500 for itemizers (indexed)
Earned Income Tax Credit	11% up to $550 maximum (not indexed)	14% up to $700 maximum (indexed)
Tax Rates		
Individuals	11-50% (14 tax brackets; indexed)	15-38% (4 tax brackets; indexed)
Corporations	15-40% up to $100,000 income, 46% thereafter (5 tax brackets)	15-30% up to $75,000 income, 36% thereafter (3 tax brackets)
Minimum Tax		
Individuals	20%	25% (many loopholes eliminated)
Corporations	15%	25% (many loopholes eliminated)

Pollution . . .

(Continued from page 3)

report, *Technologies and Management Strategies for Hazardous Waste Control.* According to the report, the United States generates more than 250 million metric tons of hazardous and potentially hazardous waste each year, or about 1 metric ton (2,205 pounds) per U.S. citizen.

Approximately 40 million metric tons of this massive amount of waste are regulated by EPA. EPA does not currently regulate small plants or businesses (such as dry cleaners, printing shops, metal plating firms, and so forth) that generate less than 1 metric ton of waste a month. Such small amounts are not in themselves hazardous; they become so, however, when concentrated in one place.

The 210 million metric tons of unregulated potentially hazardous waste go to the sanitary landfills designed for municipal waste. Leading experts, however, generally agree that sanitary landfills are not properly designed to receive such waste and that they will probably leak toxic substances into the environment. These sanitary landfills tend, as in Houston, to be located in or near black residential areas, which are therefore at special risk.

The 40 million metric tons of EPA-regulated waste goes to landfills designed specifically for hazardous waste. In the South, a disproportionately large share of these landfills are in black communities. According to a study released by the General Accounting Office (GAO) in 1983, entitled *Siting of Hazardous Waste Landfills and Their Correlation With the Racial and Economic Status of Surrounding Communities,* three of the four hazardous landfills in EPA's Region IV (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee) are in communities with a majority-black population. All four of the sites are in communities where at least 26 percent of the population have incomes below the poverty level (and most of that 26 percent is black). The four sites are Chemical Waste Management (Sumpter County, Alabama), Industrial Chemical Company (Chester County, South Carolina), SCA Services (Sumpter County, South Carolina), and the Warren County PCB Landfill (Warren County, North Carolina).

Black communities that have been exposed to large amounts of environmental pollution because of earlier inadequacies in the disposal of hazardous waste have not fared so well in the cleanup process.

The GAO study was precipitated by a controversy involving the Warren County PCB Landfill in 1982. The landfill is in the small black town of Afton in a county that is poor, rural, and 60 percent black. In 1982, the Warren County PCB Landfill was to become the final resting place of more than 32,000 cubic yards of soil that was contaminated with the highly toxic industrial chemical PCB (polychlorinated biphenyl) and had been illegally dumped along the roadways of 14 North Carolina counties in 1978.

National black leaders zeroed in on this as a "civil rights" issue. Dr. Joseph Lowery of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and U.S. Representative Walter Fauntroy of the District of Columbia led more than 400 demonstrators in an unsuccessful attempt to prevent trucks from dumping the PCB-contaminated soil in the Warren County landfill.

This case, like the others we discuss, illustrates the difficulty of affecting environmental policies and the need for sustained, organized efforts to combat policies that negatively affect black communities.

Black Love Canals

The dangers of hazardous landfills became clear at Love Canal in 1978. We are now much more cautious—although not always cautious enough—about where and how we dump toxic waste. We now know that if toxic material is not properly disposed of, it will eventually leak into the environment and cause serious health problems. Nevertheless, in many communities large amounts of hazardous chemicals were deposited in the ground before we became aware of the dangers. They have already polluted the environment.

When such conditions are discovered, remedial action can be taken if citizens appeal forcefully enough to government or industry. The remedial action can be cleanup—making the site safe, possibly by fencing it in or removing the toxins; it can also be compensation—buying out the home owners so they can afford to relocate.

EPA has been involved in cleaning up some of the communities where this type of pollution has occurred and has sometimes offered the residents millions of dollars in compensation. For example, EPA offered to buy out the small town of Times Beach, Missouri, where chemicals sprayed on roads to control dust were discovered in the air 10 years later.

But black communities that have been exposed to large amounts of environmental pollution because of earlier inadequacies in the disposal of hazardous waste have not fared so well in the cleanup process.

A case in point is Triana, a small all-black town in northern Alabama. In the *National Wildlife Journal* of August 1980, syndicated columnist Barbara Reynolds described Triana as the "unhealthiest town in America." The Center for Disease Control in Atlanta had tested 1,000 residents of Triana and found them all to have elevated levels of DDT and PCB in their blood. Although the source of the PCB was not known, the DDT was determined to have been produced by the Olin Chemical Company at a nearby Army missile base from 1947 to 1971. In 1971 DDT was banned in the United States and the plant manufacturing it near Triana was torn down, but more than 4,000 tons of DDT residue remained buried in the area and eventually worked their way into a fishing creek popular with Triana's residents.

(Continued on page 11)

The Crisis . . .

(Continued from page 4)

Caught in the Middle

I can personally attest to the difficulties this environment has created. I am an acknowledged critic of the civil rights leadership and I share the administration's views on federal enterprise zones, a youth opportunity wage, educational vouchers for low-income students, ownership among responsible public-housing tenants, a work requirement for able-bodied welfare recipients, punishment for those who brutalize their neighbors. I am no enemy of right-to-work laws; I do not despise the institution of private property; I do not trust the capacity of public bureaucracies to substitute for private initiative.

But I am also a black man; a product of Chicago's South Side; and a veteran of the civil rights revolution, in spirit if not practice. I agonize at the extraordinary waste of human potential represented by the despair of ghetto America. I lament, deeply and personally, the almost total lack of progress we have made in relieving the suffering that goes on there. And for me it is not enough, not nearly enough, to fault liberals for much that has gone wrong. This problem is so far from solution, yet so central to the well-being of our nation, that a commitment by the highest levels of government is required—a commitment that does not prejudge the specific methods to be employed but that acknowledges publicly how unacceptable is the current state of affairs.

I am not issuing a call for big spending. Neither am I appealing for a slick public relations campaign to show that Ronald Reagan "cares" as much as Tip O'Neill does. Rather, I am making a plaintive cry for government to actively engage this problem, for government to give racial inequality a high place on its domestic agenda.

Even while the government must continue to be involved in some areas . . . , expanded black self-reliance is also essential.

Nothing I have said here should be construed as retracting, or retreating from, the views I have expressed in the past on the crucial importance to blacks of "self-help." All that I have said before is still true and important: there is a difference between the "enemy without" (racism) and the "enemy within" (the dysfunctional behavior of young blacks that perpetuates poverty and dependency); blacks need to face squarely the political reality that we now live in the "post-civil-rights era"; claims based on racial justice now carry much less weight in American public life than they once did; and some civil rights leaders have wantonly surrendered the moral high ground, since they have sought benefits for their own people in the name of justice even while revealing indifference or hostility to the rights of others. But selling those positions within the black community is infinitely more difficult when my black critics are able to say, "But your argument plays into the hands of those who are looking for an excuse to abandon the black poor"—and when I am unable to credibly contradict them.

Toward True Equality

Ultimately, therefore, the deteriorating quality of our public debate about racial matters has come to impede the black community's effort to realign its priorities. Yet such realignment is crucial, both in the interests of the inner cities and for the political health of the nation. For even while the government must continue to be involved in some areas (education, employment training, enforcement of antidiscrimination laws, and provisions of minimal subsistence to the impoverished), expanded black self-reliance is also essential.

It is essential for black dignity—the dignity that would command equal respect. Equal respect, in turn, is a precondition of true equality in America. By true equality I mean more than an approximately equal material provision. I also mean equality of respect and status in the eyes of one's fellow citizens. No group can attain this goal when many members of the group, permanently and without any apparent good reason (ill health, old age, and so forth), are not self-supporting.

The dignity of our people—and therefore true equality—is undermined by the view of the black condition that civil rights leaders remain wedded to. From them we hear too much the story of discrimination, repression, hopelessness, and frustration, and too little the saga of the march forward to genuine empowerment, with or without the cooperation of others. Those leaders seek to make blacks the conscience of America, even at the cost of our own souls. Those leaders require blacks to present ourselves to American society as permanent victims, incapable of advancing without the state-enforced philanthropy of whites. By evoking the past suffering and current deprivations of the ghetto poor, some black leaders seek to feed the guilt and, even worse, the pity of the white establishment.

My answer is that we blacks ought not allow ourselves to become ready doomsayers, always willing to exploit black suffering by offering it up to more or less sympathetic whites as a justification for ever larger monetary transfers. That posture seems to express a fundamental lack of confidence in the ability of blacks to make it in America, as so many millions of immigrants have done and continue to do. Even if this approach produced the monetary transfers, it could not possibly lead to true equality of status in American society.

Achieving Excellence, Not Mandating It

Clear evidence of what I am talking about is the current, quite heated debate over quotas and affirmative action. On the surface, the argument is one of principle. Opponents of quotas claim they are merely defending the rights of all citizens to be free of discrimination, and proponents claim they are trying only to secure rights for blacks that the courts have upheld.

Both of these positions, of course, are disingenuous. But I am not interested here in the issue of principle. Rather, my concern is with the inconsistency, for blacks, of relying broadly on quotas while claiming to aim at "true equality." In a sense, the demand for quotas concedes at the outset the impossibility of ever being truly equal. To approve of one standard for hiring blacks and another for hiring whites is tantamount to acknowledging that blacks are unable to perform up to the standard for whites.

The call to replace tests with quotas is the response many black leaders make in almost every instance of racially differential performance. When blacks cannot pass a high school proficiency test—throw out the test, black leaders yell. When black teachers exhibit lower testing skills than whites, the very idea of testing teachers' skills is attacked. If black athletes fail to achieve the minimal academic standard set for participants in intercollegiate sports, then we are urged to set a separate, lower standard for them, and those who suggest the need for a standard in the first place are accused of racism. If black suspension rates are higher than those for whites in a given school district—well, let's investigate that district for racist administrative practices. When black students are unable to gain admission to the elite public schools in Boston at the same rate as whites, let's ask a federal judge to mandate black excellence.

The inescapable truth is that no judge can mandate excellence; no selection committee can create distinction in black scholars; and no amount of setting double standards can make black students competitive or comfortable in academically exclusive colleges and universities.

The only way blacks can achieve true equality in American society is by striving for more excellence and less failure in their schools, in their communities, and on their jobs. More black scholars of distinction will be required. Black neighborhoods, or black teenage males, will have to stop being threats to the safety and property of white (and black) people. Black students at exclusive colleges will have to partake of the full range of social and intellectual experiences offered there, without the self-consciousness and insecurity so common in those environments today. Black politicians will have to appeal to all voters and represent districts not mainly black.

Indeed, in the end, nothing less than earned achievements can form the basis of true racial equality in America.

Pollution . . .

(Continued from page 9)

The creek's hazardousness was documented as early as 1978, yet neither the U.S. Army nor the federal government took action. Finally, in 1980, the mayor of Triana, Clyde Foster, filed a class action suit against the Olin Chemical Company. The company settled out of court in 1983 for $24 million. The federal government, however, made no offer to "buy out" Triana, even though an army base had been partly responsible for the problem.

A variant on the Love Canal type of situation is the case involving two black neighborhoods in West Dallas, where chemicals presently polluting the environment were discovered to be health-threatening. The knowledge has not been followed by fully remedial action on the part of the authorities, however. As early as 1981, EPA toxicologists warned EPA administrators that lead from three lead smelters in the two black neighborhoods was polluting the air. The contamination was called serious enough to require "immediate cleanup." Two years passed and nothing was done. But in 1983 EPA's Office of Toxic Integration and the Center for Disease Control studied children who lived near the smelter and found high levels of lead toxicity in their blood. Lead contamination can adversely affect mental and cognitive development. Air emissions from the smelters were thereupon found to pose an immediate health threat to the nearby residents, especially to the children, and at that point EPA and the Dallas Health Department began to clean up the symptom. That is, they dug up the contaminated soil in the area—the soil all around the smelters in the children's playgrounds.

Blacks need to use their community resources to develop their own environmental advocates and experts to protect and preserve the quality of life in their neighborhoods.

They did not, however, clean up the cause, or the source, of the lead pollution problem, despite the efforts of the West Dallas Lead Pollution Task Force, a black community-based group. The group has successfully used the city's zoning ordinance to challenge one of the three smelter operations, but the others continue to operate. The group's most recent strategy has included filing suit against the industrial polluters and bringing citizen pressure directly to bear at City Hall.

Slowly, blacks are awakening to the dangers of living in a polluted environment. They are beginning to form protest groups, file lawsuits, and organize demonstrations to demand an unpolluted environment. Much more effort on their part is needed, however. Whether it is a matter of deciding where the city dump sites will be located, or getting a local chemical plant to dispose of its toxic waste more carefully, or trying to secure federal assistance to clean up an area that has already been contaminated by health-threatening chemicals, blacks must become more involved in environmental issues if they want to live healthier lives.

Blacks should work with mainstream environmental organizations, since those organizations wield substantial power. But more importantly, black communities need to incorporate environmental issues into their own agendas for economic development. Blacks need to use their community resources—churches, civic clubs, neighborhood and lawyers' associations, civil rights and political organizations, colleges and universities—to develop their own environmental advocates and experts to protect and preserve the quality of life in their neighborhoods.

Telescope

JCPS Annual Dinner Reminder

The Joint Center's ninth annual dinner will be held March 26, 1986, at the Washington Hilton Hotel. Franklin A. Thomas, president and chief executive officer of the Ford Foundation, will be the featured speaker. Tickets for the dinner are available at a cost of $5,000 for sponsors' tables of 10, $2,000 for patrons' tables of 10, and $200 for individual tickets. Reservations may be made with Alfreda Edwards at 202-626-3555.

Proposed Senate Committee on Families and Youth

Senators Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-NY), Jeremiah Denton (R-AL), and others have introduced a bill to create a Special Committee on Families, Youth, and Children in the U.S. Senate. The committee would analyze the effects of government policies on families and children and would put out an annual report.

Currently, issues involving families and youth are divided among several Senate committees. By centralizing responsibility for such issues within a single committee, the senators hope that the Senate will address the problems of American families and children more systematically.

Mayor Morial Co-Chairs Privatization Council

The Privatization Council, Inc., has appointed Ernest N. Morial, mayor of New Orleans and president of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, to the position of co-chairman of the council, along with Prescott S. Bush, Jr., president of Prescott Bush Co. The Privatization Council is a group of organizations that encourages the public sector to explore privatization (use of the private sector to provide public services). Members include Arthur Andersen & Co. and Arthur Young & Co.

Since in many communities the amount of public dollars is declining, privatization is gaining increasing attention as an alternative way of delivering public services. (For information on how privatization works, see "Alternative Service Delivery" by Robert Suggs in the February 1985 issue of *Focus*.) Morial and Bush will organize educational programs, conferences, publications, and a speakers' bureau to inform potential users of the benefits of privatization. The council publishes a quarterly journal and plans to launch a newsletter in the near future.

For more information, contact the Privatization Council, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, Suite 3755, New York, NY 10112; telephone 212-247-1872. Or contact Mayor Morial's office by writing to L. Cates, Office of Public Information, City Hall, 1300 Perdido Street, New Orleans, LA 70112; telephone 504-586-4322.

JCPS Publication Explores Differences in Black and White Political Attitudes

Inside Black America, an analysis of the attitudes of black and white Americans on a wide range of political issues, has just been published by the Joint Center. Written by Thomas E. Cavanagh, former JCPS senior research associate, the book is based on a survey of more than 900 blacks and 1,300 whites, conducted by the Joint Center and the Gallup Organization in the summer of 1984. That survey—one of the most extensive samplings of black and white political attitudes ever attempted—aroused an unprecedented amount of interest in black political attitudes.

Exploring a wide range of political attitudes within the black and white communities, *Inside Black America* contains in-depth analyses of

- the differences between the black and white votes in the November 1984 elections;
- the political mobilization of blacks between 1982 and 1984;
- partisanship within the black community;
- white backlash in the South; and
- the feasibility of blacks being elected to national office in the future.

Copies of *Inside Black America* are available for $4.95 each. Write to Publications Clerk, Joint Center for Political Studies, 1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20004.

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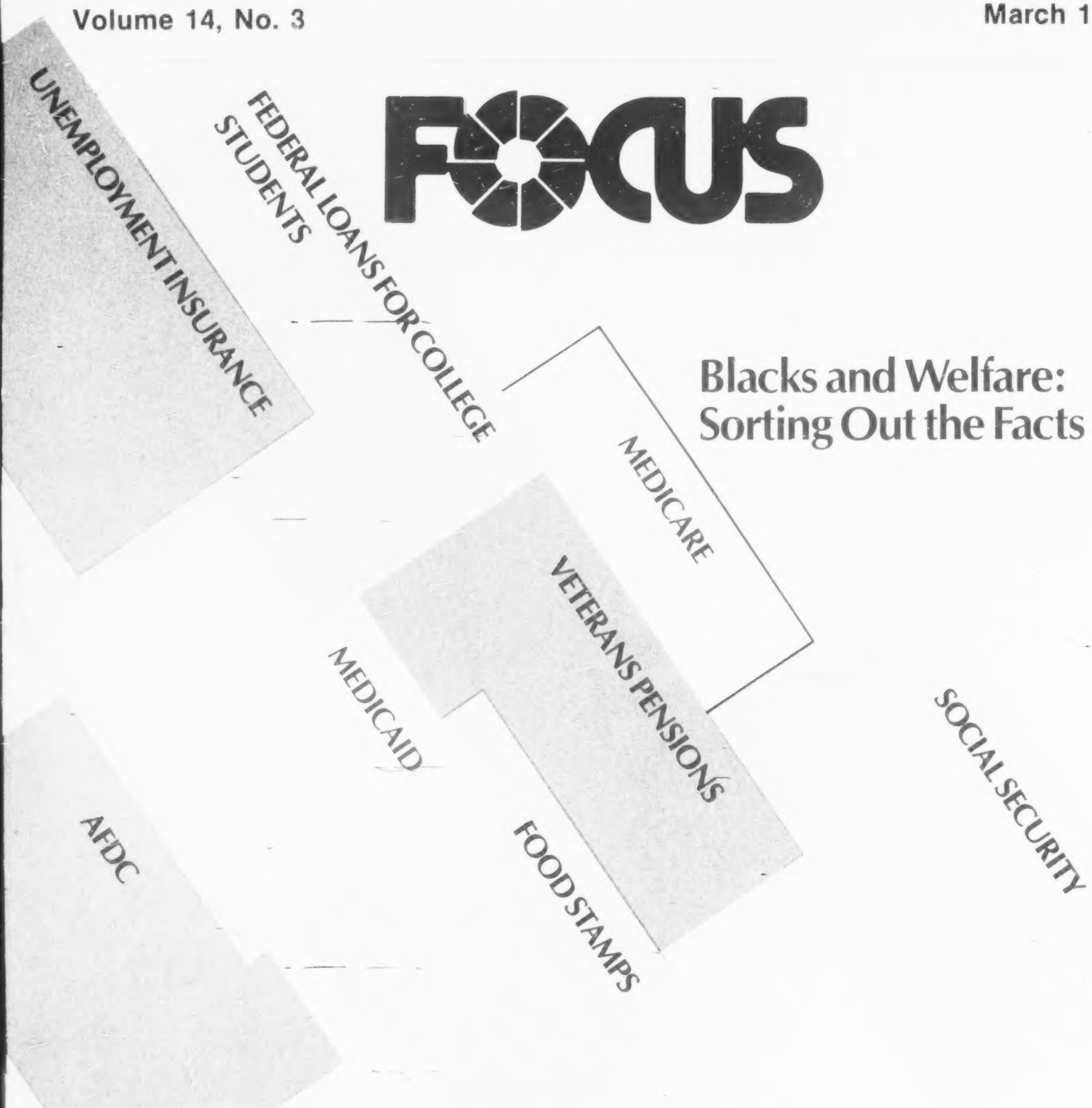
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Blacks and Welfare: Sorting Out the Facts

Black Political Opinion
Where the polls point

Ohio Task Force Targets Minority Health

Getting On-Line
Computer conferencing and political power

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Perspective

Our Rights Have Been Snatched Away

Have you ever heard of the Supreme Court's *Grove City* decision or the proposed "Civil Rights Restoration Act"? Since *Focus* readers are well-read and politically astute, you probably have. But what about your friends and neighbors?

Grove City was the biggest civil rights robbery in history, and the Restoration Act is the most underpublicized police job in recent memory. Together they are an issue crying out for public attention and congressional action: we need the Civil Rights Restoration Act to recapture the civil rights stolen by the *Grove City* decision.

Here are the basic facts. More than 20 years ago, Congress passed the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Title VI of that act prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin in a "program or activity" that receives federal money. Using Title VI and its "program or activity" language as a model, Congress later enacted legislation that protects the civil rights of women (Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972), of disabled persons (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973), and of the elderly (the Age Discrimination Act of 1975).

But the enforcement of all those civil rights laws was put in jeopardy by the Supreme Court's 1984 ruling in *Grove City College v. Bell* and the Reagan administration's interpretation of the ruling.

The Court ruled that since the student financial aid office was the only part of Grove City College that received direct federal funds, the aid office was the only part of the college that was subject to the anti-sex-discrimination provisions of Title IX. The rest of the college would be free to discriminate against women in programs or activities.

Shortly afterward, William Bradford Reynolds, the assistant attorney general for civil rights, declared that the Court's interpretation would be applied across the board to all four of the civil rights laws, since they all have the same "program or activity" language and share a common legislative history. Since the other three statutes cover not only educational institutions but all organizations that receive federal funds, the Justice Department was therefore extending the ruling to corporations, local governments, hospitals, airports, and so forth.

Later that same year, several members of Congress responded to the Court's decision and the administration's interpretation of it by introducing a bill called the Civil Rights Restoration Act. That act would recommit Congress to its full original intent in passing the civil rights laws: namely, prohibiting discrimination throughout *entire* agencies or institutions that receive *any* federal funds. The bill passed the House of Representatives but died in the Senate.

The bill was reintroduced in 1985. With dozens of cosponsors in the Senate and a couple of hundred in the House and supported by a bipartisan coalition of groups lobbying Congress, the bill was widely expected to become law. As of now, it has not. Because the U.S. Catholic Conference and anti-abortion groups want to attach two abortion-related amendments to it, the Civil Rights Restoration Act has been kept on hold since last May.

The proposed amendments no doubt raise important issues that are of great concern to many people. However, the protection of civil rights is also important, and legislation to achieve that protection should not be used as a battleground for conflicts over abortion.

According to the American Civil Liberties Union and the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund, "Citizens should let their representatives and senators know that they want the Civil Rights Restoration Act passed as a clean bill, without these controversial amendments. Only enactment of this important piece of legislation can restore effective civil rights enforcement. Simple justice requires no less."

Unless we take action now, we will continue to be robbed of our full civil rights. The Civil Rights Restoration Act is an appropriate police action to prevent such robbery.

For more information on the Civil Rights Restoration Act, contact the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights (the organization mobilizing the bipartisan coalition that supports the act) at 2027 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 (202/667-1780).

Eddie N. Williams
President

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Getting On-Line

by Vernon L. Robinson

(The author is a doctoral fellow in information systems at George Washington University. He is president of the Cutting Edge, an information systems consulting firm, and a member of the board of directors of the 21st Century Institute for Political Action.)

A black woman announces her candidacy for the U.S. Senate, strongly supported by 80 black political, community, and business leaders from across her state. At no time did all those leaders sit down together. Instead, in conceiving, planning, and conducting her campaign, the woman coordinated the leaders' feedback through a computer-based conference.

A state legislative black caucus files a bill that will dramatically improve educational opportunities for low-income children. The caucus has only one professional on its staff; nevertheless, it drew on the expertise of more than 200 black professionals—people so mobile that the caucus could not maintain current mailing addresses for three-quarters of them. The staff person kept in touch with everyone through a computer-based conference, which served as a permanent address for all those professional nomads.

These hypothetical events represent a few of the ways in which computer-based conferencing can help politicians and political aspirants achieve their goals. Especially in districts where money and advice are scarce for black office-holders and candidates, this technology could prove a great boon to those who make the effort to learn about and use it. Computer-based conferencing is not a minor technological innovation but represents a quantum leap in the number of people able to contribute to a discussion and in the speed with which feedback can be received.

What Is Computer Conferencing?

Computer conferencing is a method of communicating in which the participants, who may be at widely scattered locations, use a computer system to record their own comments on a given subject and to retrieve the comments that the other members of the group have recorded. Instead of talking to one another face to face or over the telephone, in other words, conferees at a computer-based conference "talk into" and "listen to" their computers without anyone else having to be on the line at the same time.

Participants simply type their comments at a keyboard and send them over telephone lines to a central computer, which files the comments under a particular conference topic in the order in which they are received. Conferees may access all conference topics to which they "belong." They may also send messages directly to individual members of the conference (which is analogous to whispering at a conference table).

What Are Its Benefits?

Computer-conferencing technology has been available for over a decade, but until recently not many organizations used it. Only a few government, business, and university offices could be hooked up, and the necessary equipment was expensive. But since the early 1980s, the costs of hardware, software, and time for accessing lines have been falling; the number of homes and offices with personal computers has been growing exponentially; and more people have become computer literate. Computer-based conferencing has therefore become more feasible as a way for people in different locations to communicate with one another.

Computer-based conferencing has several advantages over telephone conferencing. First, the only equipment needed is an inexpensive lap-top computer and a telephone modem. Second, conferees can participate in the "conference" at any time of the day or night, without having to coordinate their schedules. Third, the quality of participation is better because people have time to reflect before responding to what someone else has said.

Finally—and probably most important to those who are involved in politics and concerned about the link between participation and empowerment—conferencing allows more people to participate than other forms of communication do. Therefore, it provides an increased sense of "ownership." That is, in most round tables and other group discussions, a small number of people make the most important decisions and impose them on the rest of the group in a top-down fashion. The bulk of the group has not had a voice in the decision-making and feels less than committed to ensuring the success of the project. In contrast, computer-based conferencing allows many more people to participate in all stages of decision-making, so many more people have a stake in what happens to the project.

In fact, computer-based conferencing makes possible the creation of a nationwide round table of equals who have a sense of "ownership" in a given project because they contributed equally to its development.

Computer-based Conferencing and Political Participation

The advantage of allowing more people to participate is especially significant to public officials and would-be public officials. With computer-based conferencing, such people can expand the network of those with whom they exchange ideas, information, data, and advice. They can therefore project their influence further, strengthen their positions with constituents or potential constituents, and tap the resources of many more people than would be possible otherwise.

In particular, computer-based conferencing makes it easier for black public officials to use the informational and technical resources of the burgeoning and highly mobile black professional class. The knowledge and skills of that class have often been hard for traditional political and community groups to draw on. For one thing, those groups have been rigidly hierarchical, placing a premium on "dues paying." For another, the members of the middle class have been highly mobile, so they no sooner pay their dues than they move to another community or region and begin the cycle anew. Computer-based conferencing can change all that, as it offers public officials and the black middle class a unique and valuable two-way opportunity. Public officials can gain new sources of ideas and information; black professionals can indirectly put their knowledge and training to work in the public sphere.

One national computer-based conference dedicated to supporting black political action at every level is

(Continued on page 11)

Black Political Opinion

by Linda F. Williams

(The author is a senior research associate at the Joint Center.)

Politically, blacks have long been liberal on the issues that matter most to them—economic and civil rights issues—and their voting behavior has reflected that liberalism. But after Ronald Reagan's election to the presidency in 1980, many political analysts began speculating about the level of latent black support for conservative priorities and policies.

Throughout Reagan's first term, however, poll after poll showed black Americans to be steadfastly liberal on economic and civil rights issues. Moreover, almost all blacks, whether liberal or conservative, disapproved of the way Reagan was handling his job as president. In the presidential election of 1984, 89 percent of the black vote went to Reagan's opponent.

Nevertheless, conservatives continued to search for support among blacks, waging what some have termed "the battle for the black mind." And recently, several polls have produced "evidence" that black support for Reagan may be growing—or, at least, that black approval of the way Reagan is handling his job may be growing.

Does this mean that black attitudes have fundamentally shifted? If so, why? And does it mean that black voting patterns will be different in the future from what they have been in the past?

What the Polls Seemed to Show

In late December 1985, a *New York Times* headline surprisingly claimed, "Most Blacks Back Reagan, Poll Finds." That headline itself received headlines in newspapers across the country. The *Times* poll found that, a year after the election, a whopping 56 percent of blacks approved of the way the president was handling his job.

Not so surprisingly, conservatives greeted the *Times* finding with enthusiasm, whereas black leaders and many analysts questioned it. The enthusiasm was natural, but so too was the skepticism, since several other polls conducted at about the same time produced findings that differed considerably from the *Times* findings and from one another. For example, also in December 1985, the Gallup poll and the ABC/*Washington Post* poll reported that 27 and 36 percent of blacks, respectively, approved of the way the president was handling his job. A month later, in January 1986, the ABC/*Washington Post* poll and the *New York Times* poll reported that 23 percent and 37 percent of blacks, respectively, approved of his handling of the job.

Evaluating the Polls

Obviously, these divergent findings cannot all be correct. To interpret them, we must evaluate the polls that produced them.

To evaluate a poll, we need to consider—

- the type of sampling procedure (does everyone have an equal chance of falling into the sample?);
- the margin of error;
- the size of the sample (the larger the sample, the smaller the margin of error);
- the method of interviewing, i.e., by telephone or personal interview (nonwhites, Southerners, lower-income people, the less well educated, younger adults, and people in small communities and rural areas are less likely to have telephones);
- the characteristics of the interviewers (responses can be affected by the personalities, racial characteristics, and styles of the interviewers); and
- the wording of the questions (were the questions unambiguous and unbiased?).

By those criteria, the January *Washington Post* poll (reporting a 23 percent black approval rating of Reagan) appears to be more valid than the others. All the surveys used the same kind of sampling procedure and the questions had the same wording, but the January *Post* sample included a larger number of blacks (1,022) and therefore had a smaller margin of error, and it used black interviewers. In contrast, the December *New York Times* poll, which started the furor, interviewed only 103 blacks, and as the *Times* chief pollster, Adam Clymer, recently reported, they were almost certainly an unrepresentative sample.

Although some of the polls may have suffered from methodological problems, all of them showed some black movement in support of the president. Reagan's job approval rating among blacks has at least tripled since November 1984, when most national polls found it to be about 8 percent.

Such an unexpected and striking development raises two questions: what caused the change, and what does the change mean for black partisanship and presidential preferences?

What Caused the Change?

The reasons for the improvement in black ratings of Reagan are not immediately obvious, but we can make several guesses. Possibly by now the 1981 Reagan budget cuts and the harsh recession of 1982 seem so far in the past that they no longer influence black views of the president. Or, since younger blacks and black men approve of the president in greater proportions than older blacks and black women, possibly blacks are attracted by Reagan's "strong leadership" (Rambo?) appeal. Blacks may also be responding to the same issues that have improved the president's ratings among whites (that is, the TWA hostage crisis, his personal battle with cancer, and the Geneva Summit). Another possibility is that blacks are already looking ahead to the post-Reagan era and feel it is pointless to set themselves against a man who, in any case, will soon be out of office.

Finally, the polls themselves may be having a bandwagon effect. Reagan's personal popularity among the populace as a whole may discourage both Democratic and black leaders from criticizing him, and that, in turn, may temper black attitudes toward Reagan. Growing numbers of blacks may thus feel it is futile not to go along with the majority—not to jump on the bandwagon.

Whatever the reasons for the improved ratings, the improvement clearly has more to do with the president's personal style and political success than with his political philosophy. When blacks were asked about Reagan's handling of particular economic and race-specific policies and about their own political philosophies, they distanced themselves from the president by exceptionally wide margins.

(Continued on page 9)

A Special Report

Many people agree that America's welfare system needs to be changed. Perhaps the first way to start is by dispelling some commonly accepted misconceptions about how benefits are distributed, who the recipients are, and how welfare affects its recipients. This report is the Joint Center's attempt to sort out some of the answers to these questions, especially with respect to blacks.

The report printed here is a modified version of one prepared in cooperation with the organizers of the National Issues Forum (NIF), a nationwide program of community discussions that bring interested citizens together at the local level to discuss major public policy issues. This report complements a monograph on welfare policy that the Domestic Policy Association (NIF's sponsor) prepared for the NIF meetings.

Blacks and Welfare: Sorting Out the Facts

by Katherine McFate

(The author is special assistant to the director of research at the Joint Center.)

The country is engaged in a vigorous debate about the future of federal welfare policy. Three issues are at the center of this debate: the high cost of welfare spending, especially at a time of soaring federal budget deficits; a belief that the very costly social welfare programs of the past two decades have largely been ineffective in significantly alleviating poverty; and a fear that some welfare programs, notably Aid to Families With Dependent Children (AFDC), might be intensifying social problems by encouraging illegitimacy and dependency. Although these concerns have been most vigorously expressed by conservative analysts and policymakers long opposed to federal social welfare programs, a growing number of other people now question the continued effectiveness of programs like AFDC, and urge reform.

The debate about welfare policy raises a number of profound value questions. Should the federal government provide assistance to the poor? If so, to what extent? And what criteria should it use in determining whom to assist?

Unfortunately, consideration of these questions and of welfare policy in general is often influenced by misconceptions about the distribution of welfare costs, the recipients of welfare benefits, and the effects of welfare programs. Moreover, these misconceptions often have racial overtones. There are two reasons for this. First, a disproportionately large segment of the black population receives assistance. Second, some of the social welfare programs of the 1960s were enacted in part to create opportunities for those who had suffered from decades of legalized discrimination. The result is that some white Americans view welfare programs as handouts to blacks unwilling to support themselves.

Many Americans do not understand that poverty programs are not the main cause of recent increases in welfare spending; that more whites than blacks receive welfare; and that higher unemployment rates among blacks have created a need for government assistance, rather than the reverse.

The Distribution of Welfare Costs

During the past two decades, federal social welfare expenditures have increased substantially by every measure: in absolute dollars, as a percentage of the federal budget, and as a proportion of GNP. Public concern about this increase appears to have centered on AFDC, Medicaid, and other programs to aid the poor. However, welfare expenditures also include several programs targeted at groups other than the poor. These include Social Security and Medicare for the elderly; veterans' compensation; disability and unemployment support for workers; and federal loans for college students. Most of these programs were established as part of the New Deal of the 1930s; some were created in the mid-1960s.

By 1984, the average annual AFDC payment was less **than half** ***the average Social Security payment.***

In the late 1960s and early 1970s some welfare programs were modified. The most costly of these changes was a major reform of the Social Security system in 1972. Social Security benefits were increased by 20 percent, and a cost of living adjustment (COLA) was tied to these increased benefit levels. The COLA was designed to protect the elderly on fixed incomes from the ravages of inflation, which had significantly reduced the buying power of the dollar. The COLA did protect the elderly. It also rapidly escalated social welfare expenditures, especially since the number of Social Security recipients was increasing.

Virtually all the other major welfare programs were also experiencing sharp increases in expenditures, in terms of absolute dollars. For example, veterans compensation went from $2 billion to $10 billion; federal unemployment payments grew from $2.6 billion to $23.7 billion; and student assistance increased from $329 million to $8.5 billion. In short, during the past two decades, government social welfare spending of all kinds has skyrocketed. The recipients most in the public eye have been the poor, but the recipients receiving the most money, as we have seen, have been the elderly.

The Recipients of Welfare Benefits: The Elderly

Ironically, even though polls consistently show that a large majority of the American public believes too much money is spent on welfare, the public also remains committed to the single most costly welfare program—Social Security. (Congress has therefore been adamant about protecting COLAs for the elderly from the budget reductions called for by the Reagan administration.) This widespread public support for Social Security is rooted in the belief that retired workers and elderly citizens are "entitled" to the benefits they receive. Most Americans believe that Social Security payments are simply returns on the savings an individual made during his or her working years.

That belief is erroneous. Current Social Security payments come not from a person's earlier contributions to the Social Security system but from current payroll taxes. Thus, yesterday's workers are being supported by today's work force—at a level far beyond the level of Social Security deductions taken from their paychecks many years ago. Not only that, but some of the workers of today who are helping to support the recipients of Social Security are themselves poor and may even qualify for means-tested government assistance, like Food Stamps and Medicaid.

Although Social Security benefits are distributed in a nondiscriminatory way, blacks benefit less than whites. One reason is that blacks are underrepresented among Social Security recipients. Blacks are 12 percent of the population but only 10 percent of the families, and 9 percent of the unrelated individuals, receiving Social Security. This underrepresentation is due to blacks' shorter life expectancy. In 1982, a black person's life expectancy was almost 6 years less than a white person's (69 and 75 years, respectively). Life expectancy for black men was actually less than the retirement age—which means that many black men contribute to Social Security all their working lives but do not live to receive benefits.

The second reason blacks benefit less than whites from Social Security is that benefit levels are tied to wage levels, and during their working years blacks have lower wages than whites. The average black family received only $5,091 a year from Social Security in 1983, whereas the average white family received $7,117. Individual blacks received an average of $3,721 per year, and individual whites $4,777.

The Recipients of Welfare Benefits: The Poor

Children and families dependent on government assistance programs have not fared as well as the elderly. The principal program from which they receive direct financial aid is AFDC. But no COLA clause was attached to that program and, as a result, families with poor children have experienced a 30 percent decline in the real value of direct government assistance during the past two decades. Other welfare benefits, such as Food Stamps and Medicaid, have also declined by about 20 percent through inflation. By 1984, the average annual AFDC payment was *less than half* the average Social Security payment. Whereas the federal government spent about $8.3 billion on AFDC payments to families with poor children in 1984 and another $20.1 billion on Medicaid, it paid out over $225 billion in Social Security and Medicare benefits for the elderly.

Poverty has special disadvantages for children because its effects are cumulative. A child born into poverty will have difficulty acquiring the skills that could enable him or her eventually to break out of the cycle of poverty.

The negative effects of poverty begin while a child is still in the womb. Poor women are less likely to receive prenatal care and are therefore more likely to give birth to underweight babies who have severe health problems. As poor children grow, the preventive health care they receive is more likely to be inadequate. They are also more likely to suffer from nutritional deficiencies that interfere with their cognitive development.

Poverty among children has been rising dramatically. Today, 20 percent of the children growing up in America— over 14 million children—are growing up in poverty. In female-headed households, more than 50 percent of all children are poor. Even in families with male breadwinners, about 14 percent of the children are poor.

The great increase that has occurred in the number of poor families with children is closely related to a great increase in the number of families headed by women. During the past 2-½ decades, the number of female-headed families has more than doubled. It rose from 4.5 million in 1960 to 10.1 million in 1985—and 44 percent of all female-headed families with children live in poverty. Moreover, research shows that such families are likely to remain poor for longer periods than two-parent families.

The increase in the number of female-headed households has been especially pronounced among blacks: almost half of all black families are headed by women, and more than half of all black children now live in families headed by women. Among black female-headed families, the poverty rate is 67 percent—in contrast to the 44 percent rate for all female-headed families. Although black female-headed families constitute only 4 percent of the population, they constitute 33 percent of all poor households that remain in poverty for more than eight consecutive years.

The main reason minorities rely on AFDC for longer spells than whites is that among female heads of families with children, blacks are much less likely to (re)marry than whites.

The major program to provide aid to poor children, AFDC, was established during the New Deal to help widows with children, and orphans. In about half the states, AFDC now provides support to poor families with children under 18 with an unemployed father, and in all states it provides support to poor female-headed families with children, whether the women are widows or not.

The federal government provides over half the AFDC funds, but state governments administer the program and set eligibility standards and benefit levels. This leads to great differences among states in benefit levels. In 1984, for example, Alaska gave $800 monthly to a family of four and Mississippi gave only $120. In 1984, in only five states did the monthly AFDC payment reach even 70 percent of the official federal poverty level. In most states, AFDC payments were less than half the poverty level. And in seven states the payments were *less than one-quarter* of the poverty level.

Of the more than 14 million American children who live in poverty, only about 11 percent receive AFDC support. And even for those who do receive benefits, at current levels AFDC is unlikely to lift them out of poverty.

Does Welfare Lead to More Female-Headed Families?

Critics of federal welfare programs have blamed those programs for much of the increase in the number of female-headed families. They contend that the availability of AFDC benefits encourages some men to stop supporting—or even to abandon—their families. They also claim that generous welfare benefits encourage young women to have children out of wedlock. (As we have seen, however, in no state are welfare benefits generous.)

Welfare rules in 26 states deny benefits to families with an able-bodied father in the household. Nevertheless, many years' worth of research has yielded no evidence that welfare benefits contribute significantly either to the dissolution of intact families or to a growth in the number of out-of-wedlock births. If welfare benefits caused an increase in the number of female-headed families, we would expect the increase to be greatest in states with the highest benefit levels. Research has found no consistent relationship between AFDC benefit levels and the increase in the number of female-headed families.

In fact, with respect to illegitimacy rates, researchers at Harvard University found that states with high benefit levels tended to have lower illegitimacy rates than states with low benefit levels, even after adjustments were made for differences in race, region, education, income, and urbanization. Moreover, the researchers did not find any relationship between the size of the AFDC payment and the rate of illegitimacy when they looked at illegitimacy only among the group most likely to be eventual AFDC recipients (nonwhite teenage high-school dropouts). Between 1972 and 1980, while the number of children in black female-headed households was increasing by 20 percent, the number of black children supported by AFDC was *falling* by 5 percent. The women who were purportedly having children "to get on welfare" were neither applying for nor receiving AFDC support.

Does Welfare Encourage Dependency?

Another claim frequently made about welfare for the poor is that recipients would rather receive government handouts than earn their own keep. Neither attitudinal nor demographic evidence supports this assertion. A survey taken by the *Los Angeles Times* in 1985 showed that almost 80 percent of the poor said they would prefer to earn their living rather than receive welfare, and almost 90 percent said the best way for the government to deal with poverty was to give poor people job training or else create government jobs for them, rather than simply give them more money.

When AFDC was instituted in the 1980s, its benefits were considered temporary expedients to help recipients get through a few bad years. Popular misconceptions to the contrary, AFDC recipients still use welfare in this way. Only a small proportion of AFDC recipients could be characterized as having long-term dependency on welfare. In 1979 (the latest year for which data are available) about 30 percent of the families on AFDC had received it for less than a year, and the majority of all families on the rolls had been there for less than 4 years. The number of families that had been receiving public support without interruption for 10 years was less than 8 percent of the total.

Women usually leave the AFDC program for one of three reasons. First, their dependent child may grow up or leave the household, making them ineligible for AFDC; second, they may marry or remarry, thus obtaining private support; third, they or other members of the household may find employment and lift the family out of poverty with their earnings.

About 15 percent of AFDC recipients exit from the welfare rolls because they have "lost" their children; about 33 percent leave through remarriage; and another 33 percent are able to earn enough as workers to leave. Information on about 10 percent is unavailable. Still others receive aid from members of their extended family or from an inheritance.

Of those who leave through marriage or an increase in earnings, about 40 percent return to AFDC at some future time. Of those who leave through increased earnings, a third of them remain poor. When welfare mothers work, the wages they earn are usually very low. A full-time job at minimum wage does not provide a family of three with an income above the poverty level.

Not surprisingly, women who have graduated from high school are more likely to earn their way off welfare than high school drop-outs, and they are also more likely to (re)marry than high school drop-outs are. This fact alone puts minority women in a worse position than white women, since blacks are more likely than whites to be high school drop-outs.

Marriage as a Way Out

The main reason minorities rely on AFDC for longer spells than whites is that among female heads of families with children, blacks are much less likely to (re)marry than whites. White women in all categories of age and education are three times as likely as black women to use (re)marriage to exit from AFDC. The low rate of (re)marriage among black women is a function both of the unfavorable ratio between black males and black females in the 25-55 age group and of the high rate of unemployment among black males.

There are several reasons that the male-female ratio among blacks is much less favorable to women than the comparable ratio among whites. Among both blacks and whites mortality rates are higher for male infants than for female, but the difference between male and female infant mortality rates is greater among blacks than among whites. Moreover, black males have a much higher probability of dying before age 30 than white males (one out of every five black men will be a victim of homicide before age 30). Finally, a higher percentage of black males are in prison.

Work programs cannot successfully train public assistance recipients and place them in private sector employment without providing adequate support services.

Of the black men who have survived to become potential spouses, a high percentage are often unable to fill the role of provider because they are not employed. Among whites, the ratio of employed men per 100 women has been relatively constant for the past three decades. Among blacks, the ratio has been declining steadily since the early 1960s. This decline began *before* 1968, when welfare eligibility requirements were loosened and welfare rolls expanded. In the 1950s and the early 1960s, the Census reported that nearly three-quarters of all black men were working, but by 1984, after several recessions, the Census counted only 55 percent of black men as employed. (The rest were unemployed, not in the labor force, or not available for interview.) The jobless rate among black men today, in other words, is similar to the jobless rate of the entire working population during the Great Depression.

Welfare and Work Incentives

Critics of AFDC and the Food Stamp program claim that these programs destroy an individual's incentive to work. The facts belie this charge. During the late 1960s and the 1970s, when AFDC rolls were expanding, the labor force participation rate of women (both black and white, lower- and middle-class) increased significantly. Even during the period when welfare availability and benefits were growing most rapidly, the labor force participation rate of poor women, already high, was increasing. Today, over 60 percent of all black women and 55 percent of all white women work. Most mothers with children under age six do not work full-time, but among those who do, blacks are more numerous than whites.

Until the 1980s, federal law had encouraged AFDC recipients to combine work and welfare. Legislation was passed in 1967 requiring AFDC recipients with children older than six to register for work or training. In 1969 the "$30 and a third" rule was instituted, allowing the first $30 and a third of all other money earned by AFDC recipients to be disregarded in the computation of monthly welfare benefits. Moreover, working AFDC recipients were allowed to deduct work expenses when they estimated their income to determine the amount of benefits for which they were eligible.

In 1981, however, the Reagan administration's Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (OBRA) drastically changed the work incentives for AFDC recipients. The "$30 and a third" rule was limited to the first four consecutive months of employment, and ceilings were set for child care and working expenses. As a result of the OBRA reforms, approximately half of all working AFDC recipients lost their AFDC and Medicaid eligibility; thus, by working, they cost their families both income support and health care coverage. Another 40 percent lost part of their AFDC benefits. A report by the General Accounting Office said the OBRA reforms made it economically "rational" for many working AFDC recipients to give up work to retain benefits. However, the incentive to work and not be dependent on welfare was so great that the vast majority of working poor chose to give up government assistance (including medical insurance) rather than give up their employment.

Social welfare spending, especially in the area of health care, has been of real benefit to blacks as well as whites.

OBRA simultaneously tightened up eligibility rules for AFDC and authorized states to operate work relief programs to force recipients to "work off" their grants. This shift in policy was reinforced by the 1982 Tax Equity and Fiscal Responsibility Act, which permitted states to require women to conduct a job search upon applying for AFDC benefits.

Other attempts have been made to put welfare mothers to work. However, neither the government-sponsored Work Incentive Program (WIN) of the late 1960s nor the experiments of the privately funded Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation have been very successful. They have showed that many welfare mothers are highly motivated and want to support themselves, but they have also demonstrated that work programs cannot successfully train public assistance recipients and place them in private sector employment without providing adequate support services, such as child care, transportation to work or to training, and remedial education in basic skills. Many of the early programs did not provide adequate support services and did not train participants for jobs that would allow them to become self-sufficient.

State Initiatives

In response to OBRA and reductions in federal support for poverty programs, a number of states are planning and administering programs of their own design with the aim of reducing welfare dependency. Guidelines vary enormously, reflecting the degree to which state legislators are aware of the problems encountered by previous programs and shape the new program to prevent similar failures.

State employment and training programs offer a promising alternative to government support of the poor and seem to be quite popular with both the general public and the poor. Programs planned and implemented at the state level may be more flexible and responsive to unique local and individual circumstances than federal programs are. But for state initiatives to be successful, careful planning is necessary; immediate increases in administrative manpower and in the time and money invested in welfare recipients may be necessary, as well. The promised pay-off in long-term savings to the taxpayers, however, is very great, as more and more welfare recipients become able to support themselves.

Massachusetts is often cited as an example of a state that has successfully implemented an employment and training program for welfare recipients. Participation is voluntary. A combination of counseling, training, social support services, and work experience is tailored to the needs of individual recipients. The program's administrators claim that 23,000 AFDC recipients have found private employment through the program, saving taxpayers almost $36 million.

Reassessing Welfare

When we look back on the record of our country's social welfare programs and ask whether they have accomplished anything of merit, the answer must be a resounding yes, especially since World War II. Between 1950 and 1980, advances were made in eradicating poverty and its effects: life expectancy increased, infant mortality rates were cut in half, and the official poverty rate dropped from 30 percent of the population to 13 percent. Among individuals over 65, the official poverty rate dropped from 33 percent in 1960 to 16 percent in 1980. Among individuals in families headed by women, it dropped from 45 percent in 1960 to 37 percent in 1980. Public assistance has played an important role in ensuring that all American children are provided with a minimum level of support (but *not* a "comfortable" standard of living).

For blacks, although poverty remains a serious problem, living conditions have substantially improved. Just 25 years ago, more than half of all black people in the United States lived in poverty, and today about a third do. Infant mortality rates for blacks, although still twice those of whites, dropped more rapidly between 1950 and 1980 than did infant mortality rates for whites. The life expectancy for blacks increased by almost nine years between 1950 and 1980. That for whites increased by only five years. Clearly, social welfare spending, especially in the area of health care, has been of real benefit to blacks as well as whites.

Should public assistance do more than it has done? A consensus seems to be growing that it should. Americans believe in the dignity of work; they believe that jobs are better than handouts. Many state legislatures are trying to restructure their public assistance programs to make those programs lead to self-sufficiency for the able-bodied poor rather than simply provide subsistence. In the short run, this may require greater investments of time, effort, and even money. However, the potential payoff for taxpayers and for the poor themselves is enormous.

National and state legislators will be debating these issues in the year ahead. They will ask whether the nation can afford the time and money required for preparing the poor to lead independent lives. Perhaps a better question is whether we as a nation can afford the long-term costs of failing to create training and employment opportunities for the poor.

Black Political Opinion

(Continued from page 4)

Economics, Race, and Political Philosophy

Take economic issues, for example. When the January *Washington Post* poll asked, "Generally speaking, would you say Reagan's economic policies have helped most blacks or held them back, or made no difference one way or the other?" 49 percent of blacks said Reagan's policies have "held them back," 33 percent said Reagan's policies have "made no difference," and only 11 percent said the policies had helped. In the same poll, only 14 percent of the black respondents approved of the way Reagan was handling unemployment, only 10 percent approved of the way he was handling aid to the poor; and only 23 percent approved of the way he was handling the federal deficit.

On race, the same poll found that 56 percent of blacks thought Ronald Reagan was a racist. Another 56 percent said blacks had been helped by many government assistance programs that the Reagan administration wishes to eliminate. Blacks also differed with Reagan on affirmative action programs. In fact, blacks now support these programs more than they have in the past. Blacks agreed by 50 to 38 percent with the statement that "Because of past discrimination, blacks who need it should get some help from the government that white people in similar circumstances don't get." In a *Post* poll five years earlier, blacks had disagreed with that statement by 49 to 41 percent.

On political philosophy, the January *Post* survey asked people to label themselves ideologically. Twenty-three percent of blacks called themselves conservative, a number statistically indistinguishable from the 24 percent who applied that label to themselves five years ago. The number of blacks who called themselves liberal, however, rose during the same period, from 36 percent to 41 percent. Clearly, this is *not* evidence of any burgeoning black conservatism, whatever else it may be.

What Lies Ahead

So perhaps in the end the only thing we can conclude from the Reagan approval ratings is that—

- black public opinion is reasonably diverse;
- a majority of blacks are still liberal on policies important to them;
- a great majority of blacks still oppose Reagan's conservative policy agenda; and
- blacks as a group are still far more liberal than whites as a group.

If, then, blacks remain liberal on the issues that matter to them, what inferences can one draw as to black partisanship and presidential politics during the next few years? In other words, what party and what kinds of candidates are blacks likely to support in 1988? A look at the last two presidential elections may help us answer that question.

The Effects of the Last Two Elections

The presidential elections of 1980 and 1984 sharpened a distinction between the Republican and Democratic parties that has existed at least since the critical party realignment of 1932. Since 1932, the Democratic party has been relatively more liberal and the Republican party relatively more conservative. But until 1980, each party had a substantial ideological wing that tended in the other party's direction (conservative Democrats and liberal Republicans).

Between 1964 and 1980, more and more voters were calling themselves independents. At the same time, the voters who continued to call themselves Democrats or Republicans were increasingly committed to their party's dominant ideology. The two Reagan elections accelerated that process of polarization, reinforcing and clarifying the distinctions between the two parties while reducing both the leftward dispersion of the national Republican party and the rightward drift of the national Democratic party. Between 1980 and 1984, Reagan's popularity grew most among people who called themselves conservatives, people who called themselves Republicans, and white born-again Christians. On the Democratic side, the groups that gave Mondale more support in 1984 than they gave President Carter in 1980 were people who called themselves liberals, people who called themselves Democrats, people earning less than $12,500, Jews, and blacks.

Within the electorate, therefore, the two parties are now a great deal more ideologically distinct, as well as farther apart, than they were before 1980. Since 1980 the Republican electorate has been much more solidly conservative and the Democratic electorate much more solidly liberal, at least at the ballot box. Fewer and fewer Republicans can be called liberal or moderate Republicans, and fewer and fewer Democrats can be called conservative Democrats.

Blacks and the Two Parties

The sharper the lines of ideological demarcation between the two parties (at least in terms of the issues important to blacks), the less one can expect black voting behavior to change. As long as the national Republican party remains dominated by staunch conservatives who fail to address the black agenda (civil rights enforcement, administrative and judicial appointments, minority contracting, and educational and social programs), that party will not receive the support of black voters. As long as the national Democratic party is perceived by blacks as addressing the black agenda, that party will enjoy the support of black voters.

The January *Washington Post* poll demonstrates that blacks continue to perceive the Democrats and not the Republicans as supporters of their agenda. Seventy-two percent of black respondents said Republican leaders generally did not care about the problems of black people, whereas only 16 percent said the Republicans did care; conversely, 71 percent of black respondents said they thought Democratic leaders cared about the problems of blacks, compared with only 19 percent who said the Democrats did not care.

Changes may lie ahead, however. Already many hitherto loyal Republicans, including members of Congress, are showing signs of discomfort with the new ideological image of the party under Reagan: exceptionally conservative and anti-black. Within the administration itself, battles have been fought over affirmative action policy, economic sanctions against South Africa, domestic budget cuts, and other matters important to blacks.

On the Democratic side, there is obvious discomfort with the party's image not just as a liberal party but also as a "special interests" party. Since the 1984 election, therefore, the party has attempted to limit the role of certain groups, especially the minority caucuses. This has prompted blacks to wonder about their future role within the Democratic party.

Will Blacks Support a Republican in '88?

One can expect, therefore, that if someone less conservative than Reagan were to win the Republican party's presidential nomination in 1988, the Republican party might receive more support from black voters than the 10 percent Reagan got in 1984. George Bush received only a 23 percent favorable rating from blacks in the January *Washington Post* poll, so he would have to change his image substantially to gain black votes. But Robert Dole (who has recently favored retention of affirmative action and has reached out to blacks) or Howard Baker or Jack Kemp (whose congressional records have received reasonably favorable ratings from civil rights groups such as the Leadership Conference for Civil Rights) might win many black votes. Indeed, on some issues— economic growth and equal opportunity (if not affirmative action)—Republicans might attract blacks without losing many recent ultraconservative converts to the GOP.

If Republicans were to stress those two issues, the black vote would probably be less monolithic than in 1980 and 1984. No doubt the Democratic nominee would still receive the majority of black votes, but the percentage would probably be under the 89 percent received by Walter Mondale in 1984.

Two Republicans who have already demonstrated how to attract a greater proportion of the black vote are Governor Thomas Kean of New Jersey and Mayor George Voinovich of Cleveland. Instead of attacking black leaders as President Reagan and some other Republicans have done, these two candidates embraced them and addressed issues important to blacks. Governor Kean won 60 percent of the black vote, and Mayor Voinovich won in 85 percent of the black precincts.

Black votes may in fact come to look increasingly attractive, if not necessary, to Republican candidates. The January 1986 CBS/*New York Times* poll showed that the percentage of Americans identifying with the Republican party had declined 6 points since early 1985 (dropping from 35 percent to 29 percent), whereas identification with the Democrats remained steady (at 37 percent). Moreover, should a recession occur in 1987, as many economists predict, large numbers of white Southern and blue-collar voters may defect from the Republican ticket as they did in 1982 (the previous recession year).

Will Blacks Support a Democrat in '88?

On the Democratic side, the potential presidential candidates are relatively unknown among blacks or do not receive high favorable ratings from them. Consequently, they may have more trouble attracting black votes than past Democratic candidates have had. Aside from Jesse Jackson, the only Democratic party leader to receive a strong favorable rating (81 percent) in the January *Post* poll was Edward Kennedy, who has announced his decision not to seek the nomination. This leaves Senator Gary Hart as the party's front runner. However, Hart received only 3 percent of the black vote in the 1984 Democratic primaries. In the *Post* poll, 55 percent of blacks reported that they did not know anything about Hart or had no opinion of him, and only 30 percent gave him a favorable rating.

Will Blacks Support an Independent in '88?

If no Democratic or Republican candidate emerges who is popular with blacks, blacks might launch a third-party or independent candidacy. The name put forth most often in this connection is Jesse Jackson. The January *Washington Post* poll showed that 87 percent of the blacks interviewed looked favorably on Jackson, who finished third in the 1984 race for the Democratic nomination for president. Jackson might run again for president, as a Democrat in the primaries and as an independent in the general election. Two out of three of the black respondents (66 percent) said he should seek the Democratic nomination again in 1988, whereas only 26 percent said he should not, and 53 percent said it would be "a good idea" for a black leader like Jackson to run for president as an independent, whereas 37 percent said it would not be a good idea.

The search for an independent presidential candidate, black or white, may pick up momentum as domestic programs undergo the drastic cuts required by the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings balanced budget legislation.

An independent candidacy is not likely to be very successful, however. Its probability of success is minimized by state electoral laws, custom, and the extent to which American voters have been conditioned to support a two-party system. Before John Anderson decided to run for president as an independent in 1980, 25 percent of Americans said they would support him—but in the election he received only about 6.6 percent of the vote.

The Means May Shift, But Not the End

The conclusion suggested by the recent polls, then, is that growing numbers of blacks approve of Reagan's performance as president without accepting his conservative philosophy. Despite the president's increasing personal popularity among blacks, black attitudes and goals remain as they have long been. The great majority of blacks continue to favor government intervention in the economy and in the enforcement of civil rights. This liberal orientation is understandable, given the central role that the federal government has played in reducing racial discrimination since the 1950s and in alleviating conditions such as high rates of unemployment, inadequate health care, and substandard education that blacks suffer from disproportionately.

But although black attitudes and goals are unchanged, black actions—the means by which blacks try to achieve their goals—may well be shifting. If a moderate or liberal Republican ran for office against a moderate Democrat, substantial numbers of blacks might support the Republican. If both major party candidates were conservative, blacks might pursue an independent course. The particular strategy black candidates and voters use will probably depend on the kinds of candidates put forward by the two parties. The goal, however, remains constant: to use the ballot as a tool to improve socioeconomic opportunities for blacks and other minorities.

Telescope

Duke Law Professor Named 1987 JCPS Distinguished Scholar

Jerome M. Culp, an economist and associate professor of law at Duke University, has been selected as the Joint Center's Distinguished Scholar for 1987. Established under a grant from the MacArthur Foundation, the Distinguished Scholars Program enables outstanding scholars and public policy analysts to spend up to one year conducting research at the Joint Center.

During his year at the Joint Center, Culp will examine the economic impact of court enforcement of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. (Title VII prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.) His study is entitled "The Federal Courts and Title VII: The Economics of Judicial Decision-Making."

The Distinguished Scholar selection committee, chaired by Dr. Michael Winston, vice president for academic affairs at Howard University, considered the project timely and important and felt that Professor Culp was uniquely qualified to carry out the research. Eddie N. Williams, president of the Joint Center, said, "We congratulate Professor Culp on his selection and are certain he will make a major contribution to the Joint Center's work during his tenure."

Culp will succeed Frank R. Parker, the scholar selected for 1985-86. Parker, a civil rights attorney, has been researching and writing a political and social history of Mississippi from 1965 to 1980, emphasizing increased black political participation.

Black Percentage of U.S. Population Up in 1984

Between 1980 and 1984, the black population of the United States grew twice as fast as the white population. According to a report by the U.S. Bureau of the Census, the black population increased by 6.7 percent (from 26.8 million in 1980 to 28.6 million in 1984), whereas the white population increased by 3.2 percent (from 195.1 million in 1980 to 201.4 million in 1984). The total U.S. population (including members of the armed forces overseas) increased by 4.2 percent (from 227.1 million to 236.7 million). As of 1984, blacks constituted 12.1 percent of the population, up from 11.8 percent in 1980.

Copies of the report—*Estimates of the Population of the United States, by Age, Sex, and Race: 1980-1984*, Series P-25, No. 965—can be obtained for $2.25 from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

Infant Mortality Rate Increases Among Poor

According to a report published recently by the Children's Defense Fund (CDF) and entitled *Maternal and Child Health Data Book: The Health of America's Children*, the gap between black and white infant mortality rates is widening. About 5,500 more black than white infants died in 1983; this is the widest gap between black and white infant mortality rates in more than 40 years. A black infant in Chicago, Cleveland, or Detroit in 1983 was more likely to die in its first year of life than one born in Costa Rica.

In the population as a whole, the infant mortality rate, the proportion of babies born at low birth weight, and the percentage of babies born to women receiving late or no prenatal care have all worsened during the past few years. They had improved during the 1960s and 1970s. Marian Wright Edelman, president of CDF, says, "The most common victims of [these declining rates] have been America's poorest and nonwhite children."

The *Data Book* includes nationwide and statewide data on indicators of maternal and child health, with tables highlighting trends over the past several years. Copies are available for $9.95 from the Children's Defense Fund, 122 C St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001.

Getting On-Line

(Continued from page 3)

PACNET. Expected to be operational in April 1986, PACNET was established by the 21st Century Institute for Political Action. The institute, a black bipartisan political action committee with independent financing, was founded by a group of young black professionals in metropolitan Washington, D.C. This group raised money for Harold Washington and Wilson Goode in 1983 and realized that there was a need for a federal political action committee to appeal to young black professionals and to establish an independent financial base for blacks interested in running for office.

PACNET will provide a forum for people interested in discussing public policy issues, assessing candidates for elective office, giving technical assistance to candidates endorsed by the institute's board of directors, training campaign staffers (finance directors, press secretaries, campaign managers, and so forth), and supporting the institute's existing state subcommittees and creating new ones. At present there are state subcommittees in the District of Columbia, New York, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania. They advise the national board on endorsements within their respective jurisdictions.

Because the institute's board of directors is interested in increasing the representation of blacks among elected officials of both parties at all levels of government, it will give PACNET's support primarily to challengers—of both parties. It will also invite the participation of other people who share its concerns.

Computer-based conferencing is not, however, a panacea. First, the technology will not produce the expected benefits without strong leadership. Skilled facilitators, called conference moderators, are necessary to provide direction and build consensus. Second, even though technology greatly increases the potential for feedback, brainstorming, and consensus, ultimately decisions will have to be made—and only human beings can make them. Finally, technology greatly improves the possibilities for participation but does not ensure it. Participation and its benefits will come about only if political and other resources are invested to make them come about.

(Editor's Note: Anyone interested in exploring computer-based conferencing further and linking up with PACNET can call Mr. Robinson at 202/676-4465.)

Ohio Task Force Targets Minority Health

by Ray Miller

(The author is a Democratic member of the Ohio House of Representatives. His article originally appeared in The Columbus Dispatch *and is reprinted with permission.)*

The state of health among blacks and minorities in America is alarmingly poor. Yet, until recently no one has clearly sounded the alarm.

Shocking Data

In August 1985, the secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Margaret Heckler, issued a report which compared the health of blacks and other minorities with that of America's white population.

That report revealed the following shocking data:

- Blacks have the highest overall cancer rate of any population group in the United States. Black deaths resulting from cancer are increasing at four times the rate among whites.
- Black males under age 45 are 10 times more likely to die from hypertension than white males.
- The prevalence of diabetes is 33 percent higher among blacks than whites.
- Cirrhosis mortality rates for blacks are twice as high as for whites.
- Blacks are two to three times more likely to be in treatment for drug-abuse-related problems than whites.
- Infant mortality rates for blacks are about double those of whites.
- Black women are almost four times as likely to die during childbirth as white women.

Most of this information is not new. To some it is not even particularly revealing. The tragedy is that these facts have been presented repeatedly in an anecdotal and incidental manner by those with the knowledge and ability to cause some change.

Task Force Set Up

At my request, [Ohio] Governor Richard F. Celeste has created a Task Force on Black and Minority Health to:

- Examine the conditions under which disparities in the health and health care services for black and minority communities exist, and recommend ways they can be reduced.
- Develop methods for disseminating health information and education materials expressly for the minority community.
- Develop models to improve access to and utilization of public health services.
- Develop strategies to improve the availability and accessibility of health professionals to minority communities, and
- Report its findings to the governor by February 1, 1987.

An Ounce of Prevention

While the recommendations that come from the task force should be tremendously helpful in addressing this problem in a systematic way, there are some things that we already know which can improve one's health. A wealth of scientific research reveals that the key to whether a person will be healthy or sick, live a long life or die prematurely, can be found in several simple personal habits: smoking, drinking, diet, sleep, and exercise.

We tend to forget that improved health comes more from preventing disease than from treating it once it strikes. Our fascination with the more glamorous "pound of cure" has tended to dazzle us into ignoring the often more effective "ounce of prevention."

Action, Not Blame

There are many reasons why the state of health among blacks and other minorities differs so significantly. We know that mental pain and poverty contribute to excessive smoking, chemical dependency, poor diet, and violent behavior.

We also know that hopelessness and despair turn one to false supports that accelerate death rather than sustain life. Who is at fault is not the question.

Now is the time for clear and decisive action on the part of government, business, education, health professions and the media to address this problem. There is no time for aimless debate.

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The Black Vote and the '86 Senate Races

Black Unemployment: Current Trends

Sharon Pratt Dixon: Rising to the Top in the DNC

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Perspective

JCPS Launches Associates Program

The Joint Center has undertaken a new venture—a **National Associates Program** that creates a partnership between us and our friends and supporters and that will, we hope, establish a prestigious nationwide network of people who share a commitment to racial justice. *Focus* readers will shortly receive detailed information about this program, but I wanted to share my own perspective on it with you in advance.

The **Associates Program** did not result from a sudden decision, but was something we have wanted to create for quite a while. For as I have gone around the country these past few years speaking to community groups, professional organizations, academicians, and others, I have become increasingly aware that there exists a thirst for information, for data and analyses, not only about black Americans themselves but also about policies that affect the lives and livelihoods of black Americans. Everywhere I go, I find blacks seeking greater knowledge of public policy—and, even more, seeking greater involvement and influence at all levels of government.

This kind of interest from people who specialize in civil rights issues is to be expected. But the same interest is also being expressed by people who are active in fraternal and social service organizations, in religious organizations, and in professional associations, and by people who are bankers, accountants, lawyers, and government employees—by people who wish to support the struggle for justice in ways that suit their personal interests and professional talents.

In short, many people—black and white—are seeking a new partnership for social change. They are more interested in research than rhetoric; more interested in political mobilization than protest; and more interested in achieving specific objectives than in pursuing loosely defined goals.

All this reinforces our belief that the United States has reached the stage, foreseen by W. E. B. Du Bois some 40 years ago, when the struggle for racial justice has become frighteningly complex and when "disciplined intelligence" must be applied to the continuing search for equality and social justice. The Joint Center hopes to mobilize and support this disciplined intelligence through our new **National Associates Program**—our partnership with you and others who share our concerns.

What is this program all about and how will it help you—and us—become more influential and effective in the political arena?

In return for a very low annual fee, Associates will receive a number of benefits, in addition to monthly issues of *Focus*:

- a free Joint Center monograph;
- discounts on selected publications;
- access to our extensive in-house resource materials;
- use of a toll-free inquiry line;
- invitations to JCPS conferences and symposia; and
- an Associates membership card and certificate.

And at least as important as all these tangible benefits is the opportunity for Associates to participate in an annual membership survey of their opinions on issues confronting black Americans. This survey will help us identify the most pressing issues for the black community and will enable us to respond better to requests for information and data.

When you receive our invitation to become a charter member of the **Associates Program,** read it carefully and then treat yourself to a one-year membership.

Together, more effectively than ever before, we will be able to help shape the public policies that affect us all—applying disciplined intelligence to the struggle for social justice!

Eddie N. Williams
President

FOCUS

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Sharon Pratt Dixon: Rising to the Top in the DNC

by Deborah Davis and Linda F. Williams

(The authors are, respectively, special assistant to the president and a senior research associate at the Joint Center.)

As the first black and first woman treasurer of the Democratic National Committee (DNC)—the body that conducts the Democratic party's major campaign activities—Sharon Pratt Dixon is one of the movers and shakers in national politics today. Her political accomplishments are complemented by her business success: she is the first woman to become a vice president of the Potomac Electric Power Company (PEPC0) in Washington, D.C. (she is in charge of the company's Consumer Affairs Division).

Becoming Political

As far back as Sharon Pratt Dixon can remember, she has been interested in politics. She fondly recalls "being preoccupied with the first nationally televised presidential debate"—Dwight Eisenhower and Adlai Stevenson in 1952. She was in elementary school.

Born and raised in Washington, D.C., Dixon grew up at a time and in a place that could not have offered much promise to a young girl increasingly fascinated by politics. Washington in the 1950s did not have home rule, and its residents could not vote. Nevertheless, her family encouraged her to develop political interests.

In those days before television was common, the Pratts spent their evenings in conversation. And, Dixon says, "They didn't care how old you were, you had to come to the dinner table armed with facts and be able to argue your point of view, whatever the topic—politics or religion, it didn't matter. The family encouraged you to engage in those kinds of dialogues and think your way through them, and be able to take it on the chin when they came back with their retorts."

Dixon's dinner table experiences left their mark. In high school she was elected class president, and as an undergraduate at Howard she encouraged her sorority sisters to stop running for homecoming queen and to run instead for student council president. She herself ran (unsuccessfully) for student council president.

After receiving her B.A. degree from Howard, she went on to get her law degree, also at Howard. She then taught at Antioch Law School in the District for four years and practiced with her father, attorney Carlisle E. Pratt, for two years.

But she had long dreamed of going into politics, and she has always believed in "going after your dreams." So with the support of her family and friends and with mentors like the late Patricia Roberts Harris (former Secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services) and Flaxie Pinkett (president of John R. Pinkett, Inc., a real estate company), she entered local Democratic politics.

In 1968, when the office of school board member first became elective in the District, she worked in the unsuccessful campaign of Arrington Dixon, now her former husband. In 1974, when voters in the District elected their first home rule government, she helped him win election to the city council.

Then, according to Dixon, "the new generation that came into office as a result of the first District election formed a 'Unity Slate' to elect people to the Democratic State Committee and to elect our two top party officials, national committeeman and national committeewoman." Dixon was nominated for the state committee and won. In 1977, after the District's Democratic national committeewoman, Pat Harris, became Secretary of Housing and Urban Development in President Jimmy Carter's administration, Dixon ran for the office Harris had vacated, was elected, "and just stayed with it." She has been in the party's leadership cadre ever since.

National Party Treasurer

In 1985, she wanted to influence the direction and philosophic thrust of the party. She therefore pursued the office of DNC chair and leveraged her support for that office to gain election, instead, as treasurer. Her primary base of support was blacks, women, and key business leaders (such as Peter O'Malley, president of the Greater Washington Board of Trade, and W. Reid Thompson, chairman of the board and chief executive officer of PEPCO). The office of treasurer is a natural one for her, since she had long stressed the importance of economic issues.

As DNC treasurer, Dixon is officially the custodian of monies. Her functions are to keep track of receipts and disbursements and to get a good return on DNC funds. Since she is one of the few national committee members who comes from the private sector and works for a corporation, she also helps raise money.

Her real importance as a member of the DNC executive committee, however, transcends her official functions. As she puts it, "real power is rarely seen publicly. By and large many decisions are made in the back rooms and board rooms of this country." She wants to be—and she is—in those back rooms and board rooms, and therefore does not think she will run for public office.

Power is a key word for her, as is *strategy*. "I enjoy strategy. I enjoy the process of trying to anticipate your opponent's move. How to capture power. How to build coalitions. How to disarm the opposition. I love competition." At the same time, close associates say, she is a woman of integrity who will file a minority report and speak up when necessary.

The Future of the Democratic Party

Dixon's view of the Democratic party is that right now it is in the throes of a great transformation. It is seeking to develop a new vision for America, one that will unite the party's potpourri of constituencies. These constituencies include the members of the upper-middle class for whom the civil rights and antiwar movements were formative experiences; organized labor; urban ethnics; blacks and other minorities; and white Southerners. According to Dixon,

> the Democratic party's greatest strength is its diversity. So to me, my challenge—which is a real opportunity and also a source of frustration—is to help play a role so we will see that our diversity is our strength. We must do as Ronald Reagan did with the Republican party: take what we've got and market it to the American people. Don't try to emulate the other person's product. Take your own product and sell it to the American people.

Her analysis of what happened in the 1984 presidential election is that the Democratic candidates lacked a unifying vision and, by bartering with each group

(Continued on page 7)

The Black Vote and the '86 Senate Races

by Linda F. Williams

(The author is a senior research associate at the Joint Center.)

Scholars and analysts generally pay little attention to the importance of black votes in electing U.S. senators. After all, Senate elections are statewide, and in no state are blacks a majority of the voting-age population. But what the scholars and analysts often overlook is that the black vote has sometimes played a critical role in senatorial elections, and this year, in at least four states, the black vote may again be pivotal.

Two years ago, black voters made the difference in the election of three Democrats to the Senate: incumbents Howard Heflin of Alabama and Carl Levin of Michigan and challenger Paul Simon of Illinois (who was opposing Republican incumbent Charles Percy). Each of the three was in a close race, and each Democrat's Republican opponent received a majority of the white vote. The black vote, however, went so heavily for the Democrat that it provided the margin of victory.

In a sense, of course, black votes are important in all Senate races. Blacks compose part of the electorate in every state and their votes, like all other votes, obviously affect election results. But in some places the black vote is more important than it is in other places. In Illinois in 1986, for example, Democratic incumbent Alan Dixon is by and large considered to be "probably secure" in his reelection bid precisely because of his overwhelming black support. In 1980 Dixon won only 48 percent of the white vote, but with 92 percent of the black vote he had a comfortable margin of victory.

In certain states, the black vote is more than important—it is critical. This is true of states with a very close race and a black voting-age population of at least 5 percent of the total electorate. Many senatorial elections are won by a margin of 5 percent or less. Of the seats up for election in 1986, fully half of them were won in 1980 by 5 percent or less. So if blacks make up more than 5 percent of a state's total voting-age population and the race is close, the black vote may be decisive. This assumes, of course, that blacks will register and vote in large numbers for one party. (Black voter participation for the past 20 years has been overwhelmingly Democratic.)

At present, there are 10 states in which blacks make up 5 percent or more of the voting-age population and where the outcome of the Senate race is still at least somewhat uncertain. In 6 of the 10 (California, Florida, Maryland, North Carolina, Oklahoma, and Pennsylvania), it looks now as if a heavily Democratic black vote will give the Democrats a substantial boost. In the other four (Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and Missouri), high black registration and turnout for the Democrats could do more than give the Democrats a boost: it could provide the party with its margin of victory. What follows is an in-depth assessment of the Senate races in those four states.

Alabama

In Alabama, where blacks compose 23 percent of the state's voting-age population, the two leading contenders are the incumbent, Republican Jeremiah Denton, and Democratic challenger U.S. Representative Richard Shelby. For blacks, this is a choice between two staunch conservatives.

Denton is best known for his resistance to abortion, his strong support for federal action on issues involving personal morality, and his hawkishness on questions of national defense. He has rarely voted for major civil rights legislation and was one of only four senators opposing creation of the King holiday to the very end. In 1984 he received only a 17 percent favorable rating from the Leadership Conference for Civil Rights (LCCR)—an organization that measures the extent to which the positions taken by a member of Congress agree with the positions taken by civil rights organizations.

Shelby's LCCR approval rating is 40 percent—low, but higher than Denton's. And even though he, too, opposed creation of the King holiday (and in 1981 was 1 of only 24 House members to oppose extension of the Voting Rights Act), blacks may view him as the better choice. Moreover, his conservative record gives him an excellent chance to win the votes of conservative rural whites who would otherwise vote for Denton.

The race seems likely to become increasingly close. Denton has a comfortable lead of 15-25 points, but Alabama is heavily Democratic and Denton allegedly performed few constituent services in his first term. Democrats are portraying Denton—who has spent most of his adult life outside the state—as unconcerned about local economic problems and insufficiently supportive of the state's economic development efforts.

A large black vote could give Shelby a chance to win. However, he will have to mend some fences with blacks, and black voter registration groups will have to mobilize significant support on his behalf—but a high black turnout is possible and could make the difference.

In 1980, when Denton received 57 percent of the white vote, he got only 9 percent of the black vote (and that figure is not expected to rise in 1986). He received 50.2 percent of the total vote and won by only 40,187 votes. But between 1980 and 1984, registration and turnout rates in Alabama grew faster for blacks than for whites ("turnout" is used here to mean percentage of the voting-age population). The registration rate for blacks grew by 9 percentage points, whereas for whites it grew by only 5 percentage points. The black-white gap in reported voter turnout decreased from 10.3 percentage points in 1980 to 8 percentage points in 1984. Moreover, two black candidates (Samuel Taylor and Judge William McKinley Branch) are running for the congressional seat Shelby is vacating in the Alabama 7th district (Tuscaloosa), and their efforts to mobilize voters on their own behalf could inspire substantially more blacks to register and vote.

Georgia

In Georgia, where blacks constitute 27 percent of the voting-age population, Republican incumbent Mack Mattingly is running for reelection. In 1980, when he successfully challenged incumbent Herman Talmadge, he received 39 percent of the black vote. Since his margin of victory was very slim—only 27,652 votes—the black vote clearly helped him.

Mattingly's share of the black vote in 1980 was unusually high for a Republican, especially a southern Republican. However, this high level of support may have been due, in part, to the fact that his opponent, Talmadge, not only was a long-time segregationist but also had been denounced by the Senate for financial misconduct. Many observers have pointed out that in 1986 blacks will probably have more of a choice (none of the Democrats seeking the nomination will have

Talmadge's problems), and blacks could vote heavily for Mattingly's Democratic opponent.

Seeking the Democratic nomination for the right to oppose Mattingly are U.S. Representative Wyche Fowler, Hamilton Jordan, former aide to President Jimmy Carter; attorney David Garrett; and State Representative John Russell. The front runner is Fowler, who represents the majority-black 5th district (Atlanta) and is popular among blacks. He is expected to get very strong black support in the primary and, if he wins, in the general election as well.

If Fowler does not strengthen his position among rural whites, he could have trouble in the Democratic primary or face a close race against Mattingly in the general election. Old-fashioned, small-town politics remain strong in Georgia, and until now Fowler has proven himself only in a district that is overwhelmingly urban and heavily black. He would have more of a chance if he could stake a claim to the enormous rural vote that almost reelected Talmadge in 1980 despite his problems. Therefore, Fowler is spending much of his time trying to establish rapport with rural Democratic voters, reminding them of his roots in two small Georgia towns, Albany and Dawson.

Mattingly has some major advantages. He is far ahead in fund-raising, and President Reagan has pledged strong support. Moreover, Mattingly might benefit from the intraparty debate among Democrats as they campaign for the August 12 primary—and for the September 2 runoff, if no candidate receives at least 50 percent of the vote in the primary election.

The Democrats are predicting that in the general election, white votes will split about evenly. In that case a heavy black vote might well determine the outcome. And with numerous black Democrats (including Julian Bond, John Lewis, Jan Douglas, and Charles Johnson) running for the party's nomination as candidate for Fowler's seat in the 5th district, black registration and turnout could be quite high.

Louisiana

Democratic incumbent Russell Long, who got 99 percent of the black vote in 1980, is retiring. The two major candidates for his seat are Republican U.S. Representative W. Henson Moore (6th district—Baton Rouge) and Democratic U.S. Representative John Breaux (7th district—Lake Charles). Moore has an LCCR rating of 33 percent; Breaux has a rating of 50 percent.

The real battleground will be New Orleans, which accounts for one-third of the state's votes. The black vote is extremely important there, and for several decades no Republican candidate has received more than 6 percent of it. Breaux has the backing of the New Orleans black Democratic leadership.

Moore is presently leading in the polls, but Breaux is rapidly narrowing the gap, and turnout could decide the winner. Blacks, who compose 25 percent of Louisiana's voting-age population, had a registration rate of 75 percent in 1984, up from 69 percent in 1980, and the reported black turnout rate in 1984 was higher than the white rate. (Louisiana, Mississippi, and a few other states are exceptions to the general rule that black turnout rates are lower than white turnout rates.) Breaux could also benefit from the campaign of Faye Williams for the Democratic nomination in the 8th congressional district (Alexandria). Williams, who is black, is seeking to increase black registration and turnout.

Missouri

Democratic Senator Thomas Eagleton is retiring. Running for his seat are Democratic Lieutenant Governor Harriett Woods and former Republican Governor Christopher Bond. Polls show the race to be close. Bond is attacking Woods's record of supporting legalized abortion and busing. Woods, who was popular with blacks and urban whites when she ran for lieutenant governor in 1984, is trying to build up her rural support by campaigning heavily among farm groups affected by the state's declining farm economy.

Blacks compose only 8 percent of the voting-age population. Despite this small percentage, their support was essential to Eagleton in 1980, when he failed to receive a majority of the white vote and would have lost without black support (he received 96 percent of the black vote). Woods has supported civil rights far more strongly than Bond has, so blacks are expected to vote for her just as heavily as they voted for Eagleton.

The Importance of the '86 Elections

Blacks, then, can make a substantial difference in four senatorial elections (and may be influential in at least six others). But much depends on whether the various candidates reach out to black voters and whether blacks register and vote in sizable numbers.

One problem is that not all voters fully realize the significance of voting in a mid-term election. They may not realize that in 1986, political control of the Senate and a certain psychological domination of Congress are at stake. If the Republicans keep control of the Senate, people will assume that they will retain that control for years to come, since more Democratic seats will be up for election in 1988 and 1990 than are up for election this year. However, if the Democrats regain control of the Senate, the general feeling will be that the "normal" Democratic majority has been restored.

Moreover, if the Democrats succeed in their uphill battle to regain control of the Senate, their prospects for the presidential election of 1988 will be stronger. Similarly, if the Republicans maintain control of the Senate, their presidential prospects will look brighter.

Control of the Senate and Policy Direction

The results of the 1986 elections will probably be felt in three areas in particular: budgetary decisions, policy priorities, and judicial nominations.

The makeup of the Senate, as decided by the 1986 elections, will have a lot to do with whether Congress approves stringent budget requests similar to the one the president has submitted in the current fiscal year. The current request seeks to increase defense spending by 12 percent while cutting domestic programs by 14 percent.

The makeup of the Senate will also determine whether the Civil Rights Restoration Act, bills to create jobs, and other measures favored by blacks are passed.

Finally, since only the Senate can confirm nominees for the federal judiciary, civil rights advocates look to the Senate to be a bulwark against attempts to put on the bench men (or women) such as Jefferson Sessions III (recently nominated for the U.S. District Court in Alabama). Sessions has said he believes that the Voting Rights Act is an "intrusive piece of legislation."

The importance of the 1986 elections is great. Candidates seeking black support are aware of that, as are the organizations working to increase black voter registration and turnout.

Black Unemployment: Current Trends

by Lynn C. Burbridge

(The author, an economist, is a research associate at the Joint Center.)

Recent employment trends can give a sense of either optimism or pessimism, depending on which figures one examines. Similarly, predictions of how the economy (and therefore unemployment) will change in the next few months vary, depending on the trends an analyst emphasizes.

To assess the current unemployment situation, we present below two sets of unemployment data to give two different perspectives. One set of data is average quarterly unemployment rates (Table 1); the other is monthly unemployment rates (Table 2). Quarterly figures show that unemployment declined—on the average—in the last quarter of 1985 in comparison with the first quarter of that same year. But month-to-month figures for the past six months show that although unemployment declined at first, it then rose again to previous levels.

In predicting the future, analysts feel pessimistic if they focus on historical patterns, economic activity for the last quarter of 1985, and increases in joblessness in the manufacturing sector of the economy. Analysts who focus, instead, on the recent devaluation of the dollar and on falling oil prices and interest rates feel buoyant about the immediate economic future.

Table 1. Employment Statistics for the Civilian Labor Force, by Age, Sex, and Race, Quarters I and IV, 1985, and Quarter I, 1986 (Averages)

	Quarter I 1985	Quarter IV 1985	Quarter I 1986
Totals (millions)			
Civilian labor force	115.2	116.2	117.0
Civilian employment	106.7	108.0	108.8
Civilian unemployment	8.4	8.2	8.2
Unemployment Rates			
Overall	7.3	7.0	7.1
Overall black	15.5	15.1	14.6
Overall white	6.3	6.0	6.1
Adult black males	13.5	13.5	12.9
Adult white males	5.4	5.2	5.3
Adult black females	13.2	12.8	12.2
Adult white females	5.8	5.4	5.7
Black teenagers	42.4	40.7	41.6
White teenagers	15.4	16.1	15.2

Quarterly Averages and Monthly Rates

Table 1 presents average employment and unemployment data, by age, race, and sex, for the first and last quarters of 1985 and the first quarter of 1986. Between early 1985 and early 1986, average civilian unemployment increased by two million. However, during the same period roughly the same number of people—two million—entered the labor force. Therefore, the total number of unemployed workers (more than eight million) changed very little.

This constancy in the number of unemployed is reflected in the overall unemployment rate, which dropped only 0.2 percent between early 1985 and early 1986. In the first quarter of 1985 it was 7.3 percent. After dropping to 7.0 percent in the last quarter of 1985, it rose to 7.1 percent in the first quarter of 1986.

The reduction in the unemployment rate was greater for blacks than for whites. For adult black males, the unemployment rate dropped from an average of 13.5 percent in the first quarter of 1985 to 12.9 percent during this past quarter. For adult black women the drop was larger—from 13.2 to 12.2 percent. Nevertheless, the unemployment rate for blacks overall is still double the rate for whites, and the unemployment rate for black teenagers—although it declined 0.8 percent between early 1985 and early 1986—is still above 40 percent.

These quarterly averages do not mean that unemployment is changing for the better, because other evidence presents a different picture. For example, month-to-month changes in the overall unemployment rate (see Table 2) indicate that the economy may be slowing down. From January to February of this year, the overall unemployment rate increased 0.6 percentage points—the largest one-month increase in five years; and even though the rate declined in March, it did so only slightly. Government forecasters attributed the January-to-February increase to poor weather conditions and, perhaps, to a statistical fluke. But many other analysts are concerned and think the figures indicate that the economy is slowing down and can no longer absorb more workers.

Reasons for Concern

These concerns are based on three factors. The first is historical precedent. Since World War II, business cycles have lasted an average of 45 months. (A business cycle is the period between the low points of two successive recessions.) The previous recession reached bottom in November 1982, so we are now in the 41st month of the present business cycle. The law of averages, therefore, makes it likely that we are already in the down phase of the current cycle and are approaching a new bottom, or trough.

Table 2. Unemployment Rates, October 1985-March 1986 (Civilian Labor Force)

	October 1985	November 1985	December 1985	January 1986	February 1986	March 1986
Whites	6.1	5.9	5.9	5.7	6.4	6.2
Blacks	14.9	15.6	14.9	14.4	14.8	14.7
Overall	7.1	7.0	6.9	6.7	7.3	7.2

The second reason for pessimism is that on March 20 the U.S. Department of Commerce lowered its estimate of how much the gross national product grew during the last quarter of 1985. In December 1985, Commerce predicted that the last-quarter growth rate would be 3.2 percent, but three months later, when it had more information about how the economy had actually behaved, it revised its estimate downward to only 0.7 percent. (Preliminary estimates for the first quarter of 1986 again predict a 3.2 percent growth rate, but this, too, is subject to later revision.)

The third reason for pessimism is based on changes that have taken place during the past year in the manufacturing sector of the economy. In March 1986, the manufacturing sector lost 42,000 jobs. (Over half of them were in the oil and gas extraction industry. This suggests that a decline in the price of oil, although advantageous at the gas pump, could lengthen unemployment lines.) All together, 130,000 jobs have been lost in manufacturing since March 1985. Because blacks, particularly males, rely heavily on jobs in manufacturing, this trend does not bode well for black employment in the future. To be sure, the number of jobs in the services sector of the economy has been growing, but wages there are considerably lower than in manufacturing. Therefore, the service jobs being created cannot be considered acceptable replacements of the manufacturing jobs being lost.

The Reagan Administration's Optimism

Nevertheless, government spokespersons remain optimistic about the potential for economic growth, pointing to the recent devaluation of the dollar, the declining price of oil, and declining interest rates. The devaluation of the dollar, they believe, will increase U.S. exports, thereby reducing the U.S. trade deficit and increasing employment in the industries that rely on exports. They also believe that the declining price of oil, although bad for employment in that industry, will stimulate the growth of U.S. industries by reducing their operating costs. Finally, since declining interest rates mean that investors pay less to borrow money, investment may be stimulated.

Of course, nobody knows for sure whether recent incentives for growth—the devaluation, the lowered price of oil, and falling interest rates—will effectively counteract the forces that tend to produce an economic slowdown. In any case, whatever happens within the economy during the next six months of this congressional election year may affect not only employment but also the makeup of the next House and Senate.

Sharon Pratt Dixon . . .

(Continued from page 3)

separately, made the Democrats appear to be the party of special interests. What the party needs, she thinks, is to formulate a theme that convincingly presents the Democratic party as the party able to deliver the two things Americans most want their government to deliver. Those two things are economic security and world peace.

It is precisely the electorate's yearning for security that Dixon sees as the source of President Reagan's popularity. "I don't think it's what he stands for. I think it's his decisiveness, his sense of authority, and his suggestion of comfort." So the Democrats, she believes, should present their party as the party of the 21st century, ready and armed to create a feeling of security by meeting the challenges that lie ahead. "Prosperity and parity" is what all Americans want, she claims—economic growth that benefits all groups equally. The test for emerging Democratic leaders and potential presidential candidates should be who can articulate that theme most persuasively.

Blacks and the Democratic Party

In addition to helping her party regain the presidency, Dixon would like to be useful in forging black unity within the party. A Mondale supporter in the battle for the 1984 Democratic presidential nomination, she agrees that Jesse Jackson played and continues to play a very important role as a leader of black Americans and a leader of the Democratic party. "As long as Jesse Jackson speaks up and speaks loudly, that's wonderful. We will capitalize on that to maximize our leverage within the party so it remains sensitive and responsive to the needs of black Americans."

But part of the problem for black Democrats in 1984, as Dixon sees it, is that they did not coordinate their electoral strategies or identify a "bottom line" that they could all agree on. In her view, in 1984 blacks used two strategies: some tried to be effective within the party and others sought to exert pressure on the party from without. She argues that blacks must continue to pursue a variety of strategies, but that those strategies should be coordinated to make the bottom line the same for all blacks.

In 1984, according to Dixon, blacks raised many questions about the relationship between blacks and the Democratic party but failed to provide answers. Dixon uses the analogy of a trial lawyer, who never asks a witness a question without expecting a particular answer and without knowing how the worst possible answer can be made to redound to his or her client's benefit. Black Americans, too, she believes, must not raise questions without having in mind the answers they want, if they expect to maximize their leverage within the party.

Yet, Dixon is optimistic about the future of blacks in the Democratic party and in American politics. She points out that blacks

> did not even get into the electoral game until 1965, and in the space of 20-plus years, we now have had a serious candidate for president [Jesse Jackson], we occupy mayoralties in many major cities [Chicago, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, and others], we now have statewide elected officials [Richard Austin, secretary of state in Michigan; Roland Burris, comptroller in Illinois; and L. Douglas Wilder, lieutenant governor in Virginia], and we may have a House majority whip [Charles Rangel, (D-NY)]. . . . If anyone says we are anything but survivors, they are wrong. What we did in 20 years eclipses what any group has done since arriving in this country. . . . We're new but we're good, so having learned from '84, I hope that in '88 we will unite our inside-outside strategies into a bottom line and maximize our power to achieve our goals.

(Continued on page 8)

Telescope

Correction

In the March issue of *Focus*, the article "Blacks and Welfare: Sorting Out the Facts" incorrectly states that one in five black men will die of homicide. According to the 1983 statistics of the Bureau of Justice Statistics of the U.S. Department of Justice, a black man in America had a 1-in-21 probability of being murdered in his lifetime, a black woman a 1-in-104 probability, a white man a 1-in-131 probability, and a white woman a 1-in-369 probability.

Ford Foundation President's Speech Stresses Education

In a keynote speech before 1,000 people at the Joint Center's ninth annual dinner on March 26, Ford Foundation President Franklin A. Thomas called for a renewed commitment to excellence and equal opportunity in education to meet the challenges resulting from the changing social structure of the nation.

In the face of the relative aging of the American population and an increase in the proportion of black youth, Thomas noted that "the nation's future will rest on fewer youngsters than in the past, and more of them will be black and brown."

Maintaining that black youths are not now being adequately prepared to assume a greater share of responsibility for the nation's future, Thomas called for strengthening federal and local commitments, incentives, and support systems to reverse negative trends.

New Black Presidential Appointee

President Reagan has appointed Gwendolyn S. King to the position of Deputy Assistant to the President and Director of the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs. She is one of the highest ranking black officials in the administration.

Ms. King will be working with governors, state legislators, and local elected officials to help improve communication between them and the White House on issues of intergovernmental concern—for example, welfare reform, federalism, and liability insurance.

From 1979-1986, Ms. King was director of the Washington office of Pennsylvania Governor Richard Thornburgh (R). Before holding that position she was legislative assistant to U.S. Senator John Heinz (R-PA); Division Director of Consumer Complaints at the Department of Housing and Urban Development; and a Senior Health Desk Officer for the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare.

She is married to Colbert I. King, executive vice president of Riggs National Bank in Washington, D.C., and a member of the Joint Center's Research Advisory Committee.

Sharon Pratt Dixon . . .

(Continued from page 7)

Dixon and the Democratic Party

Dixon certainly does not hold herself out as "the leader." She does, though, hope to play a constructive role in uniting black Democrats into a strong political force to ensure that the Democratic party is sensitive and responsive to the needs of all disadvantaged Americans, including those who are black. She promises to keep applying pressure to the Democratic party to make it realize that its diversity is its strength, and to keep applying pressure to Americans to make them realize that working with, not dividing against, one another is in their collective interest.

Juggling Family and Career

When asked how she handles two high-powered jobs and two teenage daughters, Dixon says, "It's not easy. It takes a lot of discipline and 20-hour days. But fortunately, I have great staffs at both PEPCO and the DNC."

She also has her family's love and encouragement, and good friends and mentors. Put all that together, mix it with a lot of luck, and what emerges is a smart, attractive, aggressive, and committed black woman who occupies a unique niche in this country's political and racial history.

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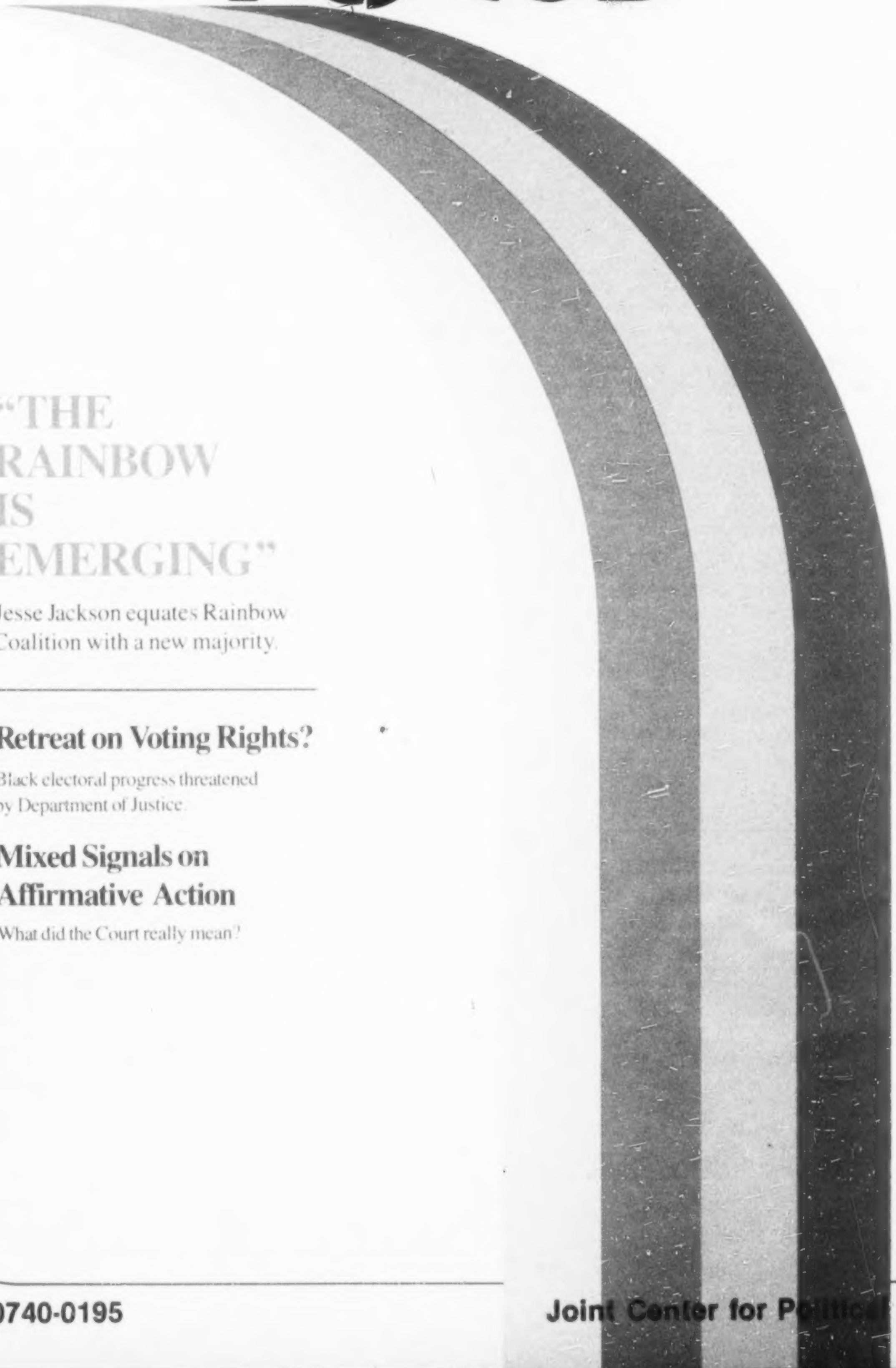

"THE RAINBOW IS EMERGING"

Jesse Jackson equates Rainbow Coalition with a new majority.

Retreat on Voting Rights?

Black electoral progress threatened by Department of Justice.

Mixed Signals on Affirmative Action

What did the Court really mean?

ISSN 0740-0195

Joint Center for Political Studies

Perspective

Involvement in Foreign Policy Vital to Blacks

Eddie Williams has ceded his "Perspective" column this month to Kenneth Longmyer, a career officer in the U.S. Foreign Service. Mr. Longmyer is currently assigned to the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, where he is studying ways of encouraging black Americans to participate in the formulation of American foreign policy. His article here is an abridged version of one that originally appeared in the Atlanta Constitution.

The death of Sgt. Kenneth Ford, who was killed in April in West Berlin by a terrorist bomb, is a painful reminder that black Americans bear a significant share of responsibility for carrying out U.S. foreign policy. They are not, however, playing an equitable role in the formulation of the American foreign policy that so profoundly affects their lives.

While it is true that black Americans affect U.S. policy toward Africa through such groups as TransAfrica, the Free South Africa Movement, Africare, and the Congressional Black Caucus, black influence even on African policy should not be exaggerated. (Black influence on policy toward Asia, Latin America, and Europe is even less.) Successive administrations have pursued policies toward Africa without the support, and often contrary to the wishes, of black Americans.

Black influence on foreign policy is meager at all stages of the policy-making process. Candidates for public office and elected officials pay little attention to the foreign-policy views of their black constituents. Indeed, influential members of Congress who represent thousands of black voters frequently take foreign-policy positions that do not have the support of their black constituents. Neither are blacks making their share of foreign-policy decisions as appointed officials, since very few blacks serve in policy-level positions in the State Department and other foreign affairs agencies.

We should not accept the status quo. Black Americans must take an active interest in U.S. foreign policy. Our country's responses to international challenges directly affect the daily lives of all Americans and will do much to determine the future of our children.

Foreign policy determines our chances of survival. And even if we are fortunate enough to avoid a third world war, local conflicts could take the lives of thousands of Americans. In such conflicts blacks, who compose 20 percent of our armed forces, can expect to suffer a disproportionate number of casualties.

Our policies toward other countries also affect the quality of life in the United States. America's quest for military security and world leadership consumes enormous resources that might otherwise be used for education, civilian job creation, housing, health care, and protection of the environment. The defense budget of $258.4 billion for 1986 represents 24.4 percent of the total federal budget and 6.2 percent of the gross national product. And going to war increases military expenditures still further. The Defense Department estimates that between 1966 and 1974 the Vietnam War cost the United States $237.6 billion, and the Lebanon expedition in 1983-84 cost $152 million. Foreign aid, used primarily to support U.S. foreign-policy goals, will cost an additional $10.4 billion in 1986.

In addition to diverting resources that might otherwise be used for domestic social programs, foreign aid and military expenditures also affect black Americans by raising the national debt. Moreover, they may contribute indirectly to a higher rate of inflation and higher interest rates.

In sum, black Americans have a duty to help shape our foreign policy. As enfranchised citizens of a democracy and as military and civilian executors of U.S. foreign policy, black Americans are morally liable for America's conduct in the international community. Neither the background of slavery nor the existence of discrimination can relieve black Americans of this burden and privilege.

Kenneth Longmyer
U.S. Foreign Service Officer

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"The Rainbow Is Emerging"

by Reverend Jesse Jackson

(Reverend Jackson is the founder and president of the National Rainbow Coalition, a national progressive political organization.)

The National Rainbow Coalition (NRC) held its first national convention in Washington, D.C., on April 17-19, 1986, to establish a permanent political organization in each state. The state organizations will offer policy alternatives to counterbalance the rightward drift of both major political parties.

More than 1,000 delegates from 45 states attended the NRC convention. They included hundreds of white and black farmers from the South and the Midwest; rank-and-file unionists; recent immigrants; teachers; college students; preachers; and others. They ratified the NRC as a corporation and established its by-laws.

Below is an excerpt from Jesse Jackson's keynote speech, in which he defines the constituency of the NRC and the challenges it faces.

"A String of Pearls"

The spirit of patriotism, the spirit of moral authority, and the new majority are present tonight. Together we can turn trauma and tragedy into treasure and triumph. This is who we are—the New Majority, the Caring Majority, the Rainbow Majority. We are a new coalition, a challenging coalition that is choosing a new course. We must connect this string of pearls—the energy workers who fuel the nation, the farmworkers who labor in the fields, the unionists who protect and give dignity to common men and women, the workers of all sorts who build this great nation, the teachers who lay the foundations of the future, the youth who will inherit the nation, the soldiers who defend us, the firefighters and police who bring safety to our daily lives, the women who are the majority of our nation. We must string all of these precious pearls, and others, into a fine necklace—a thing of beauty.

We must oppose the presuppositions of the current administration's domestic policies, not just react to the result.

Challenging Domestic Policy

We must oppose the presuppositions of the current administration's domestic policies, not just react to the result. We must separate ourselves from Reagan's definition of America and the world. He conceives of America too narrowly and too romantically; his view is too narrow to see all Americans, and he cannot see all of America in perspective.

The administration is rapidly shifting wealth upward, the middle class downward, and the poor outward. Reagan's assault on the middle class is laying the basis for a social explosion. We must repeal the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings balanced budget law. It is part of Reagan's radical economic polarization which gives tax cuts to the "haves" and wage cuts to the "have nots."

Just ask the farm family that lost its land; just ask the teachers who have lost their jobs; just ask the steelworkers and the shipbuilders and the air traffic controllers. Reagan has given the middle class prayer cloths and flags, but has undercut their standard of living. He has substituted symbolism and patriotism for substance and security. We must fight for an alternative national budget. The Congressional Black Caucus has presented the *Quality of Life Budget*. We should study and promote this budget.

We must fight the collapse of values in our children. Our children are afraid of the future. Living under the nuclear shadow, facing increasing unemployment and underemployment, having seen the loss of the family farm, our youth are afraid to go forward. They are turning to drugs to numb their fears, engaging in sex without love and making unwanted babies, or turning to nostalgia to avoid their anxieties. We must give them hope and strengthen their values, and show them a vision of the future with justice, jobs, and peace.

Challenging Foreign Policy

We must also challenge the presuppositions of the administration's foreign policy. In East-West relations, Reagan wants superiority over parity and escalation over negotiation. We must be against terrorism in the world, and we must be against it in all of its forms. We must oppose terrorism practiced by extremist splinter groups, and we must be against state-sponsored terrorism—and we must be against it regardless of the state doing the sponsoring. Only if we are consistent do we have the moral authority to challenge others to join us in opposing terrorism.

After a period of threats, counter-threats, name calling and street-corner diplomacy we have bombed Libya. Let's count the cost. The world is less secure and more dangerous today than it was yesterday; terrorism and counter-terrorism are more likely; and we have entered into a period of unconventional warfare whose end we cannot control or predict. When a rock is thrown into the water, one must be concerned about the resulting concentric circles. The street corner rhetoric and the "eye for an eye" and "tooth for a tooth" approach that are passing for this administration's foreign policy could leave the world blinded and toothless.

We must also challenge the presuppositions of the administration's foreign policy.

We are going to war with the world and bombing ourselves into a corner. Reagan's foreign policy has us seeking superiority over parity in the nuclear arms race, escalating tensions rather than reducing tensions through negotiations in East-West relations. Our Third World policy is blinded by an anti-communist obsession—with a radical disregard for the context of the Third World's history of struggle against oppression. We must support human rights as our foreign policy. Human rights is a tough policy; it heals rather than destroys. Human rights as foreign policy is morally cor-

(Continued on page 8)

Retreat on Voting Rights?

by Frank R. Parker

(The author, currently Distinguished Scholar at the Joint Center, is on leave from his position as director of the Voting Rights Project of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law. He has been involved in voting rights litigation, including cases brought under Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act, since 1970.)

Congress passed the Voting Rights Act in 1965 to ensure that every American, regardless of color, would have the right to vote. In the 20 years since the act was passed, blacks have gained representation in every southern state legislature and in many county and city governments where discriminatory voting laws and procedures before 1965 had kept them away from the polls. Black electoral progress, however, is now in danger of ending, as the Justice Department proposes to change the regulations under which it administers one of the most crucial sections of the Voting Rights Act: Section 5.

Black electoral progress . . . is now in danger of ending.

Under Section 5, the U.S. attorney general (or, alternatively, the U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C.) is required to review all new voting laws and procedures that are proposed in the states and localities covered by that section.[1] Not until the attorney general (or the District Court) finds the proposals nondiscriminatory in purpose or effect can they become law. Examples of discriminatory changes in electoral procedures are redistricting plans that dilute minority voting strength and relocations of polling places to discourage minorities from voting.

The importance of the Justice Department's "preclearance" reviews derives from their number and their effect. The department conducts reviews of 3,000-4,000 submissions involving 15,000-18,000 voting law changes every year, and the courts often use the department's standards to decide litigation brought under Section 5.

Changing the Regulations?

In May 1985, the Reagan administration proposed new regulations for the Justice Department's preclearance reviews. Opponents of the proposal fear it would reduce future enforcement of the Voting Rights Act, as well as reverse many of the gains already made.

The proposed regulations were published in the *Federal Register* of May 6, 1985, and the public was asked to comment. In November 1985, the House Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights held hearings on the proposal. Testimony was given by Assistant Attorney General William Bradford Reynolds and by representatives of civil rights and public interest organizations (including the League of Women Voters, the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, the American Civil Liberties Union, and the Mexican-American Legal Defense and Educational Fund).

Reynolds said that the regulations currently in effect, which were promulgated in 1981, had to be amended to reflect recent judicial decisions and the 1982 legislative amendments to the Voting Rights Act.

The effect of the proposed regulations would be that the Justice Department could approve of voting law changes whether they were discriminatory or not, unless the complaining party was able to prove "by clear and convincing evidence" that the changes would result in discrimination.

Representatives of the civil rights and public interest organizations said that many of the proposed regulations were contrary to the statutory language of the Voting Rights Act, contrary to the court decisions that controlled enforcement, and contrary to Congress's intent in passing the 1982 amendments to the act.

In a report issued in January 1986, the House subcommittee concluded that, "if adopted, the proposed regulations would undermine effective enforcement of the Voting Rights Act" by making it more difficult for minority voters to challenge discriminatory voting practices.

The Justice Department had planned to issue the final version of its guidelines by February 1986. It has not yet done so. Neither has it withdrawn its proposal in order to let the current regulations stand. The delay may indicate that critics' comments—which are summarized in the remainder of this article—had an effect. It may also indicate that the department itself is divided on the legality or desirability of the proposal. In any case, the department is committed to revising the proposal, and only when its final revision is published will the department's intentions concerning enforcement of the Voting Rights Act become clear.

The "Results" Test

Opposition to the Justice Department's proposed regulations has focused especially on the standard the department would use in determining whether a new state or local voting law is discriminatory. The standard used since 1982 is called the Section 2 "results" test because Congress, in amending Section 2 in 1982, prohibited voting laws that "result" in discrimination. A law is held to "result" in discrimination if it denies minority voters equal access to the political process or an equal opportunity to elect representatives of their choice. The legislative history of the 1982 Section 2 amendment makes it clear that Congress intended the Section 2 standard to be used in the Justice Department's reviews of new voting laws submitted for approval under Section 5.

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[1] Section 5 originally covered seven entire states and parts of two others. After being amended in 1970, 1975, and 1982, it now covers nine entire states, mostly in the South and Southwest, and parts of eight others.

Under Section 5, when a state or local government submits a proposed voting law to the Justice Department for preclearance, the state or local government must bear the burden of proving that the new law is not discriminatory in purpose or effect. But under the Justice Department's proposed rules, "the party or parties alleging violation of section [2]" (generally the minority voters opposing the change) would bear the burden of proof. Critics of the proposed regulations protest that to place the burden of proof on the victims of discrimination, rather than on the perpetrators, would be an extraordinary departure from the statutory language of Section 5 and from long-standing practice.

Furthermore, under the proposed rules the proof of discrimination would have to be "by clear and convincing evidence." This is the strictest standard of proof applicable in civil cases. A case that is held to this standard is very difficult to prove, and therefore the "clear and convincing evidence" test is normally reserved for a limited group of legal claims.

The proposed regulations . . . would allow some voting law changes to be implemented* without *being submitted for preclearance.

The effect of the proposed regulations would be that the Justice Department could approve of voting law changes whether they were discriminatory or not, unless the complaining party was able to prove "by clear and convincing evidence" that the changes would result in discrimination.

Supporters of the proposal argue that the Justice Department would not approve of discriminatory changes in any case. But that is hard to believe. Even under the regulations currently in effect, Assistant Attorney General Reynolds approved of six voting law changes (a Louisiana congressional redistricting plan, a North Carolina legislative reapportionment plan, and four county and city redistricting plans) that federal courts subsequently struck down as discriminatory in result. In June 1985, when the Senate Judiciary Committee voted against confirming Reynolds as associate attorney general (the number-three officer in the Justice Department), an important part of the case against him was his unwarranted Section 5 approvals.

Exceptions to Preclearance Review

A second objection to the proposed Justice Department regulations is that they would allow some voting law changes to be implemented *without* being submitted for preclearance. One such exception to the current requirement would be a redistricting plan that a state or locality had prepared and that was put into effect by court order. The proposed regulations would exempt such plans from preclearance "when the court concludes that exigent circumstances (e.g., impending elections) warrant use of such a plan on an interim basis." In 1981, the Supreme Court determined that these plans are covered by Section 5.

As Judith Sanders-Castro of the Mexican-American Legal Defense Fund has pointed out, the Justice Department's proposal creates a "dangerous loophole" through which local governments could circumvent preclearance requirements almost entirely. Most court-ordered redistricting plans are adopted under exactly such exigent circumstances, so what the proposed regulations are calling an exception would, in effect, become the rule. The Supreme Court's 1981 determination would be negated.

Limitations on Preclearance Review

A third objection to the proposed regulations is that they would unduly limit the scope of Section 5. Under existing law, the Justice Department is required to object to any voting change that would leave minorities worse off than before. The proposed regulations follow existing law, but they would add an escape clause: the Justice Department would not object to changes that would leave minorities worse off than before when such changes are "unavoidable." But as Laughlin McDonald of the American Civil Liberties Union has commented, "There is no such thing as unavoidable retrogression. The attorney general can always avoid it by objecting to a discriminatory change."

Special Elections and Redistricting

Two other sections of the proposal have been much criticized by voting rights advocates: the sections involving special elections and redistricting.

In 1985 the Supreme Court ruled that the actions of state and local officials in setting dates and procedures for the holding of special elections (for example, to fill a vacancy in an office) must be precleared under Section 5. Currently, there is no Justice Department rule spelling out the circumstances under which special elections must be precleared. The department's proposed regulation would require preclearance of special elections only "to the extent that the jurisdiction makes changes in the practices or procedures to be followed."

Continued progress by minorities in registering, voting, and winning elections in the South and Southwest still depends upon the Justice Department's strict enforcement of the provisions of the Voting Rights Act.

Critics say that this proposal is too restrictive in its coverage and would unduly limit the 1985 Supreme Court decision. For example, setting the date for a special election might not involve "changes in the practices or procedures followed" in setting special election dates, but the date selected could have an

(Continued on page 7)

Mixed Signals on Affirmative Action

by David S. Tatel and Elliot M. Mincberg

(Mr. Tatel was director of the Office for Civil Rights in the Department of Health, Education and Welfare from 1977 to 1979. He and Mr. Mincberg are partners in the Washington, D.C., law firm of Hogan & Hartson.)

The Supreme Court's recent ruling in *Wygant v. Jackson Board of Education*—the Court's first decision on a voluntary affirmative action plan adopted by a public employer—sent mixed signals about the validity of such plans. In a 5 to 4 decision that included five separate opinions, the Court ruled unconstitutional a provision of a collective bargaining agreement that partially protected minority teachers against lay-offs in order to promote affirmative action. At the same time, however, most of the justices indicated that voluntary affirmative action plans by public employers are permissible under certain circumstances. Because all public employers are subject to the same constitutional requirements as the school board in *Wygant*, the decision has important implications for school systems, city governments, and other public employers across the country.

Most of the justices indicated that voluntary affirmative action plans by public employers are permissible under certain circumstances.

Wygant involved the section of a collective bargaining agreement in Jackson, Michigan, under which, in the event of teacher lay-offs, the percentage of minority personnel laid off would be no greater than the percentage of minority personnel employed by the school system at the time of the lay-offs. Several laid-off white teachers challenged the section. The board of education argued that the lay-off provision was important to preserve the gains the board had made through its affirmative action hiring plan. Both the federal district court and the court of appeals ruled that the lay-off provision was constitutional, and both courts upheld the plan.

Virtually all the justices agreed that . . . such plans "need not be limited to the remedying of specific instances of past discrimination."

The Supreme Court reversed the lower court decisions and invalidated the plan—without, however, presenting any single controlling rationale for its decision. Five opinions were written: three separate ones by the five justices who voted to invalidate the lay-off plan (a plurality opinion by Justice Powell, which Justices Burger and Rehnquist agreed with entirely and which Justice O'Connor agreed with in part; a concurring opinion by Justice O'Connor; and a concurring opinion by Justice White); a dissenting opinion that Justices Marshall, Brennan, and Blackmun joined; and a separate dissenting opinion by Justice Stevens.

All five of the justices in the majority appeared to conclude that under the circumstances, the lay-off provision had too severe an impact on non-minority employees and was too broad to be justified as an affirmative action measure. At least four of these five justices (Justice White did not express his opinion on this subject) agreed that a public employer could justify affirmative action on the basis of evidence of past discrimination by the public employer itself. The four justices concluded, however, that the school board in question did not present sufficient evidence of such discrimination and that the school board's goals of remedying general societal discrimination against minorities and providing role models for minority students did not in themselves justify the board's affirmative action lay-off plan.

The Meaning of *Wygant*

The multiple opinions in *Wygant* make it unclear precisely how the decision will affect future cases. An analysis of those conflicting opinions, however, suggests that the following questions and answers are important for public employers to bear in mind.

Are voluntary affirmative action plans still permissible?

Yes. Virtually all the justices agreed that some form of voluntary affirmative action by public employers is permissible in some circumstances and that, as Justice O'Connor explained, such plans "need not be limited to the remedying of specific instances of past discrimination." Even the plurality opinion of Justice Powell reaffirmed the principle that "it may be necessary to take race into account" in remedying prior discrimination, and that persons not responsible for any past discrimination "may be called upon to bear some of the burden of the remedy."

May voluntary affirmative action plans be justified solely by past "societal" discrimination or the wish to introduce more minority "role models"?

Probably not. In evaluating any particular affirmative action plan, the Court will consider both the importance of the objectives that the plan seeks to serve and the extent to which the plan is tailored specifically to achieve those objectives. But the Court will apparently not accept the goals of remedying general societal discrimination and providing role models for minority students as sufficiently important to warrant affirmative action.

May past discrimination by a public employer justify voluntary affirmative action by that same employer?

Yes. An employer's attempt to compensate for the effects of its own past discrimination is clearly an important enough objective to warrant adoption of an affirmative action program. Moreover, an explicit finding of discrimination by a court or other body (such as an administrative agency) is not necessary before adoption of the plan. What is not clear, however, is precisely the type of evidence that *is* required. Statistical evidence of a disparity between the percentage of minorities in the employer's work force and the percentage of minorities in the relevant labor market is pertinent, and that evidence alone may be enough to justify affirmative action. But a disparity between the percentage of minority faculty members and minority students in a school system will not help justify affirmative action.

Can the promotion of racial diversity in a work force justify voluntary affirmative action?

Possibly. Depending upon the circumstances, the promotion of racial diversity may be a sufficiently important goal to help justify some affirmative action programs, particularly for educational institutions. What is not clear, however, is whether that purpose is enough in itself.

Where voluntary affirmative action of some sort is permissible, what affirmative action techniques may be used?

The kind of affirmative action programs considered permissible will depend upon the circumstances. The kinds of plans that will be very hard to justify are those relying upon lay-offs or other measures that, as Justice Powell explained, "impose the entire burden of achieving racial equality on particular individuals" and disrupt "settled expectations" of existing employees. At least four justices apparently believe that lay-offs may be used—if at all—only where less stringent methods would not achieve the employer's legitimate goals. Measures much more likely to be acceptable are those that tend to "impose a diffuse burden" on a larger number of individuals—measures such as hiring goals.

How does the Court's decision affect the affirmative action provisions of Executive Order 11246 (which concerns government contractors) and the U.S. Department of Labor's regulations that implement the executive order?

The decision in *Wygant* does not directly affect the presidential executive order and its implementing regulations, particularly since the executive order and the regulations do not deal with lay-offs or similar techniques. *Wygant* is quite unlikely, for example, to have any effect on the provisions of the executive order that require contractors to avoid discrimination, to post notices of their non-discriminatory policy, and to attempt to recruit minority employees.

There is some question, however, about the Labor Department's requirement in situations in which the racial composition of a contractor's work force is substantially different from the racial composition of the labor force in the contractor's geographic area. In such situations, the department requires the contractor to adopt affirmative action hiring goals. *Wygant* does not appear to question the validity of the requirement. Indeed, several of the opinions in *Wygant* suggest that such differences in racial composition can help justify affirmative action. Nevertheless, the validity of the requirement after *Wygant* is unresolved.

Additional guidance from the Supreme Court should be forthcoming in two more decisions on fair employment practices and affirmative action that are expected by early July. The continuing divisions on the Court, however, mean that public employers do not have clearcut guidelines to follow. Therefore, they should carefully evaluate their employment practices, especially in the area of affirmative action, in light of the general issues discussed above. In particular, they should scrutinize closely both the objectives served by particular affirmative action programs and the methods employed.

. . . Voting Rights

(Continued from page 5)

impact on who was eligible to participate in the election, and it should come under Section 5 preclearance rules. Therefore, critics argue, the proposed regulations should be broadened to require Section 5 preclearance for *any* exercise of discretion by state or local officials in the holding of special elections.

On redistricting plans, the proposed regulations would limit the occasions on which redistricting plans could be found objectionable under Section 5. The attorney general would be able to object only if a plan would result in a "significant reduction" of minority voting strength—but no definition of what would constitute a "significant reduction" is given. As Cynthia D. Hill of the League of Women Voters has pointed out, the phrase *significant reduction* implies that "some undefined degree of discrimination is needed before a voting change is considered objectionable." But voting rights advocates argue that elections can be won or lost by a single vote and that no degree of discrimination is acceptable. All discrimination should be "absolutely prohibited" by law, they contend.

The gains of the past 20 years have been possible, in part, because under Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act the Justice Department is required to block proposed laws and procedures that would curtail the rights of blacks and other minorities to cast a meaningful vote. Continued progress by minorities in registering, voting, and winning elections in the South and Southwest still depends upon the Justice Department's strict enforcement of the provisions of the Voting Rights Act. The proposed regulations indicate that the Reagan administration's commitment to enforcement may be questionable.

Telescope

Charles U. Daly Joins JCPS Board of Governors

Charles U. Daly, director of the Joyce Foundation and of the Ireland Fund, joined the Joint Center's Board of Governors in May. He is also an underwriting member of Lloyd's of London, a director of the Council on Foundations, and a national trustee of the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation.

Daly was a vice president of Harvard University from 1971 to 1976 and a vice president of the University of Chicago from 1964 to 1969. Between his years at Harvard and his years at the University of Chicago he founded and served as president of the Children's Foundation.

From 1962-1964 he was a staff assistant for congressional liaison in the White House under Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson.

Black Christian Group Launches TV Station

WJCB-TV 49, a black-owned Christian television station, recently went on the air in Norfolk, Virginia. According to Reverend James Vaughan, president of the Tidewater Christian Communications Corporation that owns the station, WJCB is the nation's first black-owned Christian television station. It will broadcast religious, family, and community programs.

Census Bureau Report Profiles Black Population

The U.S. Bureau of the Census is producing a series of booklets on various segments of the U.S. population, and the latest one is on black Americans. Using 1980 census and current population surveys, *We, the Black Americans* describes America's black population in terms of its growth, distribution, education, income, occupations, voter participation, and other characteristics.

Booklets already published cover American women and Hispanics. Future booklets will cover Asian and Pacific Islander Americans, American Indians, Eskimos, and Aleuts.

Copies of the booklets are available from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. Single copies are free. Discounts are available for bulk orders.

The Rainbow . . .

(Continued from page 3)

rect; it is the majority opinion; it is cost efficient; it is defensible; and it is in the national interest.

"Peace and Justice in Our Time"

Our priorities must be more accurate than our missiles. In this nuclear age we cannot settle for guided missiles and misguided leadership. In this age of tension we must come together—the workers in Austin, Minnesota, PATCO and TWA strikers, energy producers, farmers, youth—we must find common ground. The sadness of war is around us. It's dark, but the morning comes. Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning. We are convinced that our nation—a great nation, a blessed nation—is only leadership away from being the source of hope and peace and joy in the world. Beyond the storm are rays of sunlight. The Rainbow is emerging. It is a thing of beauty, an act of nature, a sign of God pointing toward the gold of peace and justice in our time.

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PERSPECTIVE

Focus Has New Look, New Feature

In this combined June-July issue of *Focus*, we bring our readers a publication that has been completely redesigned and that includes four additional pages containing a new feature, the JCPS Political TrendLetter. *Focus* will return to its regular monthly schedule in August.

This is the first time *Focus* has been substantially redesigned since it began publication in 1972. After 14 years, *Focus* was due for an overhaul. But since our newsletter has been the most celebrated of all the JCPS publications and has been commended by many readers for its quality and meatiness, we have kept firmly in mind the admonition, "If it's not broken, don't fix it."

So in redesigning *Focus*, we did not try to "fix it" or change it. But we did recognize that things done well can always be done better. So our goal was to provide more of the same but in a better way. With the help of staff and our graphics consultants, we tried to make our publication more attractive and readable, and to provide more space for the information we want to share with our readers. We think we have achieved our goal. We hope our readers will agree.

As for the new Political TrendLetter, it has been on the drawing board for over a year. Its extensive coverage of black political participation is unique. In a terse, lively style, we cover a number of political issues and keep our readers apprised of major developments and trends as they unfold each month.

The redesigned *Focus* is the centerpiece of the Joint Center's recently launched National Associates Program. Subscribers to the Associates Program receive not only the monthly issues of *Focus*, but also substantial discounts on all JCPS publications (several new publications are previewed in this issue). In addition, JCPS Associates have access to our growing computer data bases, research collections, and the vast array of information services that (thanks to computers and additional staff) the center is now able to offer the public.

Members of the Associates Program can use the information services we provide to meet many needs. People who write speeches and articles, conduct research, teach courses, or simply want to keep up-to-date on the social, economic, and political condition of black Americans will find our information services invaluable.

But to provide these information services, the Joint Center must charge a modest membership fee to supplement its income from other sources. While *Focus* will continue to be sold on a subscription and single-copy basis, the Associates Program clearly offers added benefits and is therefore far more economical.

Information produced in a timely manner is crucial for all Americans—voters, scholars, corporate executives, and civil rights activists—who are committed to the pursuit of justice and equality in contemporary America. An informed citizenry is our greatest bulwark against ignorance, intolerance, and inaction. The center is committed to gathering, producing, and disseminating information that is important to those concerned about black America. We hope, therefore, that the refurbished *Focus* will improve our ability to fulfill our mission. We hope, too, that our readers agree and will show their support by joining our Associates Program.

Eddie N. Williams

PRESIDENT

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Northern Money, Southern Homes

Black Economic Well-Being Varies In Study of 48 Metros

by William O'Hare

Income and home-ownership are crucial measures of economic well-being. Income measures the flow of dollars into a household, and home-ownership and home value reflect accumulated wealth and community status. By looking at these measures, we get a different view of black America from that provided by any single indicator.

The table on this page uses income and home-ownership to rank the nation's 48 metropolitan areas where the black population is at least 100,000. A word of caution: *The ranking is based solely on economic measures and ignores factors such as race relations, residential segregation, the economic base, and educational opportunities, all of which are important determinants of the quality of life for blacks.*

Data from the 1980 census show that:

- The economic status of blacks differed strikingly from one metropolitan area to another. For example, median household income ranged from $8,763 in Mobile, Ala., to $18,826 in Nassau-Suffolk, N.Y. Home-ownership was 18 percent in New York City but 61 percent in nearby Nassau-Suffolk. Median home values were $17,500 in Philadelphia, Pa., but $69,100 in San Diego, Calif.
- Even within the same state, differences were great. For four metropolitan areas in Ohio, for example, the rankings were Columbus—6th, Dayton—8th, Cincinnati—28th, and Cleveland—44th.
- Southern metro areas ranked a little higher than northern metro areas. Four of the top five metros are in the South, and all of the bottom five metro areas are in the North.
- Incomes were generally higher in the North, but home-ownership was higher in the South.
- Whites in all 48 metros had a higher economic status than blacks, in terms of income, home-ownership, and average home value.
- Even in the highest ranking metros, black income is only 77 percent of white income, home-ownership only 87 percent, and average home value only 83 percent. ■

Dr. O'Hare is associate director of social policy research at JCPS. The findings of his study are presented in greater detail in "The Best Metros for Blacks," *American Demographics*, July 1986, pages 27-33.

48 Metros Ranked For Economic Well-Being

To develop this ranking of black economic well-being in the 48 metropolitan areas, nine criteria were analyzed: black household incomes, home-ownership rates, and home values; the gap between the black and white values for these variables, and the black value as a percentage of the white value for the three indicators.

OVERALL RANK		AVERAGE VALUE
1	Nassau Suffolk, NY	4.7
2	Miami, FL	13.7
3	Columbia, SC	14.9
4	Richmond, VA	15.1
5	Newport News-Hampton, VA	15.4
6	Columbus, OH	15.7
7	Los Angeles-Long Beach, CA	16.1
8	Dayton, OH	17.2
9	San Diego, CA	17.3
10	Gary-Hammond-East Chicago, IN	17.3
11	Indianapolis, IN	19.3
12	Charleston-North Charleston, SC	20.7
13	Augusta, GA-SC	21.1
14	Tampa-St. Petersburg, FL	21.1
15	Nashville-Davidson, TN	21.4
16	Greensboro-Winston Salem-High Point, NC	21.9
17	Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood, FL	22.0
18	Houston, TX	22.0
19	New York, NY-NJ	22.4
20	Norfolk-Virginia Beach-Portsmouth, VA-NC	22.6
21	San Francisco-Oakland, CA	23.0
22	Jacksonville, FL	23.3
23	Kansas City, MO-KS	23.3
24	Washington, DC-MD-VA	23.6
25	Mobile, AL	23.6
26	Charlotte-Gastonia, NC	24.4
27	Raleigh-Durham, NC	24.4
28	Cincinnati, OH-KY-IN	26.8
29	Birmingham, AL	27.2
30	Jackson, MS	27.4
31	Baton Rouge, LA	27.4
32	Philadelphia, PA-NJ	27.6
33	Detroit, MI	27.9
34	Louisville, KY-IN	28.8
35	Dallas-Ft. Worth, TX	29.2
36	Shreveport, LA	29.4
37	Boston, MA	30.2
38	St. Louis, MO-IL	31.0
39	New Orleans, LA	31.1
40	Baltimore, MD	31.2
41	Pittsburgh, PA	31.3
42	Atlanta, GA	31.7
43	Memphis, TN-AR-MS	32.1
44	Cleveland, OH	32.1
45	Chicago, IL	33.2
46	Milwaukee, WI	34.9
47	Newark, NJ	35.7
48	Buffalo, NY	41.9

Source: Joint Center for Political Studies.

BU Eases First-Year Stress To Graduate More Black Doctors

Goal Is to Reverse National Decline

by Arthur J. Culbert

The nation's medical schools are producing a dismally small number of black doctors and have failed to meet the goal set by the American Association of Medical Colleges (AAMC) in 1970 of 12 percent black medical student representation by 1974. In the fall of 1985, for instance, 1,117 blacks entered medical school—6.6 percent of the total entering class. This number in fact represents a decline from the high mark of 7.5 percent in the classes of 1973-1974 and 1974-1975.

Though the percentage of blacks graduating from medical school has not risen, the applicant pool is growing stronger and black students' MCAT scores are increasing, according to a study by Steven Shea and Mindy T. Fullilove of Columbia University. Thus, medical schools have failed to meet the challenge of providing their minority students with a program of study that helps ensure academic success.

First Year Is Crucial

Studies by the AAMC have identified the first year of medical school as a particularly difficult experience for all students, and it seems to be even more difficult for black and other minority students. The percentage of blacks who repeat the first year is five times the percentage of all medical students.

In explaining the difficulties black students face, Dr. Louis Sullivan, president of Morehouse School of Medicine, pointed to the scarcity of role models and poor counseling in high school and college. In an eloquent article published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, "The Status of Blacks in Medicine," he wrote that black students "are often steered into vocational courses and less rigorous academic subjects, leaving many of them poorly prepared for the study of medicine."

BU Programs

Boston University's efforts to graduate more black physicians fit in well with other BU programs designed to reduce the first-year pressures faced by all medical students.

The Modular Medical Integrated Curriculum (MMEDIC) program, begun in 1977 and open to all BU undergraduates, admits selected students to medical school at the end of their sophomore year and provides them with specially designed courses in the basic medical sciences during their junior and senior years, for which they receive credit toward both the B.A. and M.D. degrees.

In this way, medical school is accessible to students without their having to take the MCAT. Thus, students who do not do well on standardized tests but are otherwise qualified are not prevented from going to medical school—and they are freed of the usual undergraduate premed pressures. In addition, with the spreading out of their introduction to medical school, entering students have far more self-confidence about their ability to succeed.

In 1982 BU applied the MMEDIC principles of early admission and selected transition courses to a program for undergraduates at eight other colleges: the four black colleges that make up the Atlanta (Georgia) University Center (Clark, Morehouse, Morris Brown, and Spelman); Hampton University; Pembroke State University (which has the largest group of American Indian undergraduates east of the Mississippi); the College of the Virgin Islands; and Tougaloo College.

Called the Early Medical School Selection Program (EMSSP), this program allows students from the participating schools to be admitted to BU School of Medicine in their sophomore year; the students spend two summers at BU and then, during their senior year, come to BU to take the same specially designed courses as the MMEDIC students (for which they, too, receive double credit).

The data available so far show that in the first year of medical school, students in both the MMEDIC and the EMSSP courses perform astonishingly well in comparison with other first-year students. Thus, by using nontraditional methods to select and prepare students for medical school, BU has shown that it is possible to remedy recognized deficiencies in the educational pathway. ■

The author is assistant dean of the Boston University School of Medicine and director of the Boston University Early Medical School Selection Program.

June-July 1986

JCPS

POLITICAL TRENDLETTER

In This Issue:

- Blacks think Jesse Jackson should seek the Democratic presidential nomination in 1988, but rejected candidates he supported in four primaries in 1986.
- The GOP is fielding more black congressional candidates— even in the South.
- Black congressional incumbents are big winners in their primaries.
- Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley is gaining on Republican Governor George Deukmejian.
- The Mitchells of Maryland, a political dynasty, are seeking higher offices.

Jesse Jackson's Endorsements

Though his personal popularity with blacks remains high, **Jesse Jackson has been unable to convince a majority of black voters to support the candidates he favors.** In New Jersey's 10th district (Newark), Jackson endorsed black City Councilman **Donald Payne,** who was attempting to unseat veteran white Congressman **Peter Rodino.** Even though Jackson carried this district in the 1984 Democratic presidential primary, his support for Payne (including four days of campaigning) was not enough: **Rodino, whose congressional seniority and long-time support for civil rights causes has endeared him to black voters, won easily.**

Jackson also endorsed former Congresswoman **Katie Hall,** who sought a comeback in Indiana's 1st congressional district (Gary). Although he won this predominantly white district in 1984, his support was not enough to return Katie Hall to Congress. **Voters chose to stay with the incumbent, Representative Pete Visclosky.**

In North Carolina, Jackson campaigned unsuccessfully for U.S. Senate candidate **Theodore Kinney,** a businessman. Kinney won only 4 percent of the vote, even though Jackson had gotten 25 percent of the vote in the North Carolina Democratic primary in 1984.

In the mayoralty race in Savannah, Georgia, Jesse Jackson supported former Alderman **Roy Jackson** against popular four-term Mayor **John P. Rousakis.** In the runoff, Roy Jackson won 33 percent of the vote and Rousakis 67 percent. Blacks make up 46 percent of Savannah's voting-age population, but **Rousakis led even in heavily black districts of the city.**

Despite these setbacks, **Jackson's personal popularity remains very high among blacks:** a *Washington Post* poll conducted in January 1986 gave him an 87 percent approval rating, with 67 percent supporting him in seeking the Democratic presidential nomination again, and 53 percent supporting him in making an independent presidential bid.

Blacks in the GOP

Black Republicans are still a rare breed, and **none of the 1986 black Republican congressional candidates is expected to win.** Several are running, however, including **Lamar Keels,** 4th district of Arkansas (Pine Bluff); **Ron Crutcher,** 3rd district of Ohio (Dayton); **Portia Scott,** 5th district of Georgia (Atlanta); **St. George Crosse, Isiah Fletcher,** and **Walter Manning,** all in the 7th district of Maryland (Baltimore); **Ron Taylor,** 2nd district of Illinois (Chicago); **Mildred Jefferson,** 8th district of Massachusetts (Boston); and **Mary Griffin,** 13th district of Michigan (Detroit).

Attorney **George Haley, brother of author Alex Haley,** is one of nine Republicans **seeking the seat being vacated by retiring Senator Charles Mathias** (R-Md.), a strong civil rights supporter. The Democrats are expected to win this seat.

Incumbents Up, Challengers Down

Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) members are all **heavily favored to be reelected** without serious opposition. The winners so far, most in landslide victories, are: from Chicago, **Charles Hayes** (1st district), **Cardiss Collins** (7th district), and **Gus Savage** (2nd district); from Cleveland, **Louis Stokes** (21st district); from Houston, **Mickey Leland** (18th); from Philadelphia, **William Gray** (2nd); from California, **Ron Dellums** (8th, Oakland), **Julian Dixon** (28th, Los Angeles), **Augustus Hawkins** (29th, Los Angeles), and **Mervyn Dymally** (31st, Compton). Other CBC members are running in states with later primaries.

The **tightest races were in Chicago,** where Collins won with 59.7 percent of the vote and Savage staved off six challengers to garner 49.8 percent support.

Collins's margin of victory probably came from the **predominantly white suburban parts of her district,** which gave her 65 percent of the vote. Blacks split their votes between Collins and her opponent, black Chicago City Councilman **Danny Davis.** Collins also may have benefited from a "non-endorsement": Chicago Mayor **Harold Washington stayed neutral to avoid antagonizing women voters,** who feared the loss of the only congressional seat held by a black woman. (In 1983, Collins refused to endorse Washington's historic bid for mayor.)

While incumbent blacks were riding high, **challengers came out losers.** In Alabama's 7th congressional district (Tuscaloosa), **William McKinley Branch** (a probate court judge) got only 14 percent of the vote, and **Samuel Taylor** (a farmer) received 4 percent, a long way from qualifying for the runoff. As noted earlier, **Katie Hall** in Indiana, **Theodore Kinney** in North Carolina, and **Donald Payne** in New Jersey also lost.

Only four nonincumbents so far have survived their primary races. Two are Republicans—**Lamar Keels** in Arkansas and **Ron Crutcher** in Ohio—who were unopposed but have little chance of winning the general election.

The third is former Assistant State Attorney General **Mike Espy,** a Democrat in Mississippi's 2nd congressional district (Mississippi Delta) who won 50.1 percent of the vote, avoiding a runoff by only 80 votes. Espy's troubles are not over, however: the defeated candidate, white businessman **Pete Johnson,** who came in second with 25.9 percent of the vote, has alleged corruption and fraud and has threatened to fight all the way to the Supreme Court.

The fourth is Virginia State Senator **Robert Scott,** the second black to serve in Virginia's upper house. He was unopposed for the Democratic nomination and is running in the 29 percent-black 1st district (Newport News) for a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives against two-term Republican incumbent Herb Bateman. Bateman is currently favored to win, but Scott (who now represents a predominantly white state senatorial district) is expected to give him a tough fight.

These results seem to fit the national trend in the 1986 elections. According to pollster Peter Hart, most voters seem to be more concerned with local issues and the merits and character of individual candidates and less concerned with national issues, the Reagan presidency, or liberalism versus conservatism. Under such conditions—the absence of controversial, attention-grabbing issues that challengers can exploit—the advantages of incumbency (name recognition, funds, and media attention) are readily apparent.

Across the Nation

California

In the race for governor, Los Angeles Mayor **Tom Bradley appears to be narrowing Republican Governor George Deukmejian's lead.** An early May sampling by Mervyn Field's California Poll showed Deukmejian leading 58 percent to 36 percent. But a mid-May sampling by the *Los Angeles Times* gave Deukmejian 46 percent to Bradley's 36 percent, with 16 percent undecided.

Georgia

In the race for the Democratic nomination for U.S. Representative in the 5th district (Atlanta), State Senator **Julian Bond has a sizable lead over his principal three black opponents**—City Councilman **John Lewis,** pro-business candidate **Charles Johnson,** and community activist **Jan Douglas.**

Illinois

In the 1987 race for mayor of Chicago, former Mayor **Jane Byrne will challenge black incumbent Harold Washington** for the Democratic nomination, and black State Representative **Larry Bullock** (a foe of Washington's) is hinting he may also run in the primary.

Louisiana

In the New Orleans mayoralty runoff, former black City Councilman **Sidney Barthelemy defeated black State Senator William Jefferson** 58 percent to 42 percent. The voting-age population of News Orleans is 51 percent black and 49 percent white. Barthelemy won 86 percent of the white vote and 30 percent of the black vote. Several recent elections in New Orleans have followed this pattern—two black candidates running against each other, with white voters holding the balance of power—and some commentators expect that future elections will continue to do so.

Maryland

The big news here is that retiring Congressman **Parren Mitchell is running for lieutenant governor on the ticket with Attorney General Stephen Sachs,** who is in an uphill battle to win the Democratic gubernatorial nomination. Baltimore Mayor **William Schaefer had been heavily favored among blacks until Mitchell entered the fray.** Mitchell is expected to boost Sachs's appeal among blacks, who make up almost one-third of the Democratic primary electorate.

State Senator **Clarence Mitchell III** has announced plans to run for his uncle's congressional seat, and Baltimore City Councilmember **Michael Mitchell** is running for his brother Clarence Mitchell's seat in the state senate.

Continued on next page

Massachusetts

In the 8th congressional district (Boston), a March Harrison-Goldberg poll showed black State Representative **Mel King running second to environmental activist Joseph Kennedy II,** son of the late Robert Kennedy, in a five-way race for the Democratic nomination. **Thomas P. (Tip) O'Neill,** Speaker of the House, is retiring from the seat at the end of his term. The poll gave King 15 percent of the vote, Kennedy 34 percent.

Michigan

Black Wayne County (Detroit) Executive **William Lucas is running for the Republican gubernatorial nomination.** Lucas has been touted nationally by the GOP, and political observers believe he could win with the majority of the white vote and 15 percent of the black vote. Detroit Mayor **Coleman Young is backing the Democratic incumbent,** Governor **James Blanchard,** but according to a poll conducted in April by Lauer, Bailey, and Associates, **one-third of black Democratic voters in Wayne County would be at least "somewhat likely" to switch to the Republican primary** in August to support Lucas.

New Jersey

The black vote has been **anything but predictable in this state.** Blacks gave 60 percent of their vote to Republican Governor **Thomas Kean. They supported veteran white incumbent Democratic Congressman Peter Rodino** over black City Councilman **Donald Payne.** In Newark, they ousted four-term incumbent black Mayor **Kenneth Gibson** and elected City Councilman **Sharpe James,** also black and a former Gibson ally. Atlantic City's blacks split their votes between three black candidates in a four-way non-partisan race for mayor, but in the runoff reelected black incumbent Mayor **James Usry,** a Republican.

New York

In the 6th congressional district (Queens), in a special election to fill deceased Congressman Joseph Addabbo's (D) seat, African Methodist Episcopal minister **Floyd Flake beat out State Representatives Alton Waldon and Andrew Jenkins and two white candidates.** But a subsequent count of the **absentee ballots put Waldon ahead by 208 votes,** thus he, too, is claiming victory. Flake, whose name was not on the absentee ballot because of a technical error, is threatening to take the matter to court. The **U.S. House,** which bears constitutional responsibility for determining its own membership, **could ultimately make the decision.**

Ohio

Carl Stokes, former Cleveland mayor and current Cleveland municipal court judge, **swamped five opponents** in the Democratic primary race for the Cuyahoga County common pleas judge.

Texas

In Potter County (the Panhandle), where blacks make up only 8 percent of the population, **all four black candidates on the ballot won** in the May primary. None of them will have to face a Republican opponent in the November elections. So barring a successful write-in campaign, all four will take office. One of the hottest races was for county judge: **Elisha Demerson has apparently become the first black county judge in Texas.**

“Effective Schools” Reforms Get Mixed Grade

Many Questions, Few Answers on How Reforms Work

by Denise Alston

A group of black leaders and educators came together in May at the invitation of the Johnson Foundation to discuss the Effective Schools (ES) movement, which aims to restore excellence to public school education. The group heard from ES researchers and practitioners, and raised questions about whether the ES approach could be applied in the predominantly black schools in urban centers. All present shared a concern that something must be done to improve the educational achievement of black students. They also agreed that the ES research did not answer all the questions they had raised, and urged caution in adopting the ES approach.

This article is an introduction to the issues raised by the ES movement.

Isolating Students

The assumption underlying past reform efforts was that low-achieving students suffered from some sort of handicap or "deficit" because of their parents' inadequate education and low socio-economic status. Thus, the solution adopted was to introduce "compensatory education" programs that isolated students and sought to remedy their deficits so they could enter the educational mainstream.

But even with past reforms, black students did not gain much ground: blacks are three times more likely than whites to be placed in "special education" classes and less likely to be found in programs for the gifted and talented. In high schools, blacks are grossly overrepresented in vocational education programs—many of which prepare students only for low-status occupations. And even though more black 18- to 24-year-olds complete high school than did so in the mid-1970s, fewer of these graduates go on to college.

"Effective Schools"

The limited success of the "deficit student" model has led educational reformers to focus instead on improving the schools. The currently popular Effective Schools (ES) movement is an attempt to do just that. An "effective school" is one in which students, regardless of their economic background, obtain the basic skills necessary for academic success. The schools are reorganized in such a way as to make possible academic achievement by all its students.

Underlying ES reforms is research that found "maverick" schools where student achievement exceeded expectations. "Deficits" in the student had little bearing on their educational success: the test scores of low-income students were comparable to the scores of affluent or middle-class students. The key components of an "effective school" are:

1. A school climate conducive to learning and free of disciplinary problems.
2. Teacher expectations that all students can achieve regardless of social background.
3. Emphasis on developing basic skills.
4. Use of extensive tests to monitor student performance.
5. A principal who is a strong leader to direct the instructional program.

Common-Sense Approach

The strength of the ES movement is its appeal to our common-sense understanding of how schools should function. The glaring weakness is a lack of knowledge of how the five factors actually work to produce academic success.

The Effective Schools approach is potentially a valuable alternative to the compensatory education programs. Yet, before embracing it, the black community, among others, will require answers to a host of critical questions:

1. How does a school rid itself of major disciplinary problems without simply expelling the troublemakers?
2. How do teachers with deeply ingrained notions of the limited abilities of low-income students suddenly transform their attitudes and behaviors toward such students?
3. What skills does the average principal need to lead an effective school?
4. Do ES practices work for students in compensatory programs as well as for the mainstream students?
5. Of greatest importance, can the black community afford to follow reformers who say, "We don't know how it works, just trust us"? ■

Dr. Alston is a JCPS Public Policy Fellow.

Black Businesses in Transition

Strong Growth in Services Offsets Traditional Sector Downturn

by Robert E. Suggs

Any measure used to assess the progress made by black Americans should include their participation in private business. In a capitalist system, business is the mechanism that creates wealth—and, as Frederick Douglass observed more than 100 years ago, "With money and property comes the means of knowledge and power. A poverty-stricken class will be an ignorant and despised class, and no amount of sentiment can make it otherwise."

The U.S. Bureau of the Census, in October 1985, released data gathered during the 1982 business census showing that the role of black businesses in the American economy continued to be negligible. Moreover, from some perspectives the condition of black businesses had even worsened. For example, their gross receipts, when measured in constant dollars, declined both in absolute terms and as a proportion of the economy.

But from other perspectives, black business changed significantly, and probably for the better. First, in the years from 1977 to 1982 black business was becoming more diversified and therefore less vulnerable to economic dislocations. In the areas where black firms had historically been concentrated (retail trade and personal services), the number of black firms declined dramatically; but black firms had also expanded into other industries that had been historically closed to them, like business services, heavy construction, highway construction, radio and television broadcasting, manufacturing, and wholesale trade.

The new census data show that total receipts (in constant dollars) of these firms rose 7 percent between 1977 and 1982, while the average receipts per firm jumped up by 23 percent. The 7 percent growth by these black-owned firms was double the growth rate for all firms in the economy.

Growth of Service Firms

The growth in service sector firms is particularly worth noting. These firms were 35.5 percent of all black firms in 1977, but rose to 43.4 of the total by 1982. Moreover, the growth was not even: personal service firms declined while business service firms thrived. (Business services include advertising, credit reporting and collection, and mailing, reproduction, and stenography. Personal services firms include laundries, photography studios, beauty shops, barber shops, funeral parlors, and shoe repair firms.) The receipts of business service firms more than doubled, and employment rose from 8 percent to 14 percent of the total of the labor force of all black firms. Of all the industrial divisions, only the division with business services showed a growth in employment from 1977 to 1982.

These emerging black firms have quickly moved to an elite position. Of the top 100 firms rated by *Black Enterprise* magazine, only 10 existed before 1960, and 76 were established after 1970.

New Managerial Pool

A major reason for the success of these new firms is the emergence of the first generation of blacks with managerial, technical, and professional experience in a desegregated workplace. This "growth in the pool of professional and managerial manpower" was the key determinant of black business growth, concluded the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA)(part of the Commerce Department) in a study by two economists, Dr. David Swinton and Dr. John Handy.

These emerging black entrepreneurs entered new lines of business unlike their predecessors, who had been confined by segregation to the traditional areas of personal services and small retail trade. This represented a significant shift in the types of businesses owned by blacks. Research by Dr. Timothy Bates, of the University of Vermont, shows that in 1960 54.3

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percent of black businesses were in retail trade and personal services (e.g., Mom and Pop grocery stores, barber shops, and funeral parlors). By 1982, this share had declined to 35.3 percent, and the black share of the nontraditional, high growth businesses had risen sharply, as noted earlier.

Much is being learned of this new breed of entrepreneurs. MBDA researchers found that they "are considerably younger, better educated, and tend to have higher earnings than other minority self-employed and wage and salary earners." MBDA also asserts that "the firms in the emerging lines have the greatest potential for making a significant contribution to minority business development goals." Only time will tell if these judgments are valid, but the current evidence strongly suggests that if a black firm ever makes it to the Fortune 500, it would be one founded by this new generation of entrepreneurs.

Number of Firms

Between 1977 and 1982, the number of black-owned firms grew very rapidly. The rate of increase was 46.7 percent, which was twice the rate for the preceding five-year period and nearly four times the rate that all business firms grew between 1977 and 1982.

That rapid rate of growth raised the number of black firms from 231,203 in 1977 to 339,239 in 1982. However, even the higher figure brings black business up to only 2 percent of the total number of businesses in the country. Moreover, measured in terms of annual receipts, the overwhelming majority of black businesses are very small—too small to support their owners without outside employment. In 1982, nearly 80 percent of black firms had total receipts below $25,000, and from those receipts the firms' owners had to pay business expenses and the costs of inventory.

Of the firms created between 1977 and 1982, 58.4 percent were very small: they had annual receipts of under $5,000. And almost half of those (or one-quarter of all new firms) were "nonstore retail"—probably either street vendors or people selling door to door.

Receipts

In terms of total receipts, black firms did rather poorly during both the period 1972-1977 and the period 1977-1982. (Throughout this article, all figures for receipts have been converted to constant 1982 dollars.)

From 1972 to 1977, which was a period of growth, the receipts of black firms grew, but at less than one-third the rate at which the receipts of all firms grew. From 1977 to 1982, the average annual receipts of black firms fell 38.4 percent. To be sure, 1982 was a year of severe recession—but the decline experienced by black firms was four times the decline experienced by all firms.

The relationship over time between total receipts and number of firms is another indication of economic health, and this relationship, too, indicates that black businesses as a whole have not done well. Whereas the number of black firms nearly doubled between 1972 and 1982, receipts during the same period decreased slightly.

Parren Mitchell to Speak at JCPS Set-Aside Conference

The Joint Center will hold a conference on "Minority Set-Asides: The Changing Environment" on Wednesday, September 17, 1986, from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington, D.C. Participants will address four critical issues: (1) The Origins and Objectives of Set-Asides, (2) The Constitutional Status of Set-Asides, (3) Developing Set-Asides, and (4) Administering Set-Aside Programs.

Congressman Parren Mitchell, chairman of the House Small Business Committee and the key legislator in enacting set-asides, will be the luncheon speaker. Congressman Mitchell is retiring from Congress and is running for lieutenant governor of Maryland on the ticket with Attorney General Stephen Sachs.

For more information, contact Janice Glasgow of The Creative Connection at (202) 842-4170.

Employment

One of the most important attributes of business activity is the number of paid employees. Indeed, an oft-cited policy goal of black business development is the creation of new jobs.

By this measure, the situation of black businesses has not improved in recent years. Between 1977 and 1982, despite the large increase in the total number of black-owned firms, the number of black-owned firms with paid employees other than their owners actually decreased 3.3 percent. (During the preceding five-year period, it had increased 63.1 percent.) The number of employees in black-owned firms increased slightly (1 percent)—far less, however, than the 11.5 percent increase that took place between 1972 and 1977.

By 1982, black-owned businesses were employing a smaller proportion of the labor force than they had employed five years earlier. Excluding proprietors and partners, if black-owned firms were employing only black workers, they would be employing only about 1.5 percent of the more than 11 million blacks in the 1982 labor force. Inclusion of proprietors and partners raised the total number of employees to only 4 percent of the black labor force. But one should bear in mind that nearly half of all black firms had receipts under $5,000 and were, therefore, presumably secondary activities for people whose full-time work lay elsewhere. Thus, even the 4 percent figure probably overstates the true impact of black business on employment. ■

TELESCOPE

HIGH COURT CITES JCPS BOOK IN KEY VOTING RIGHTS CASE

In a major victory for minority voters, the Supreme Court in the case of *Thornburg v. Gingles* struck down multi-member legislative districts in North Carolina for unlawful dilution of black voting strength.

Commenting on the Court's decision, Frank Parker, Joint Center Distinguished Scholar and expert on voting rights law, said, "This is a landmark decision which establishes important principles applicable to a number of pending voting rights cases. It is a very significant victory for minority voters' efforts to eliminate racially discriminatory voting structures, such as at-large city council elections. The decision will require the reversal or reconsideration of a number of lower court decisions which had denied the claims of minority voters."

In this landmark decision, Justice William Brennan several times cites an article by Mr. Parker in the Joint Center's publication *Minority Vote Dilution*, which is the only book on the subject. Published in 1984, the book is a collection of 12 essays by leading lawyers, political scientists, historians, and policy makers in the field. ■

NEW UP-DATED JCPS PUBLICATIONS NOW AVAILABLE

The 1986 edition of *Black Elected Officials: A National Roster* has now been published. The *Roster*, currently in its 16th year, is the only volume that lists the names of *all* black elected officials in the United States (along with their levels of office, addresses, and terms of office). The book also contains tables illustrating trends in the number and distribution of black elected officials since 1970, when the *Roster* was first published.

The new *Roster* shows that between January 1985 and January 1986 the number of black elected officials increased from 6,056 to 6,424, or 6.1 percent. Many of the new officials were the first blacks ever elected to public office in their jurisdictions.

Copies of the *Roster* are available for $29.50 from the Joint Center.

* * *

The first edition of the biannual *Elected and Appointed Black Judges in the United States* is also now available from the Joint Center. *Black Judges* lists all of the more than 800 black elected and appointed judicial officials in the United States. It includes their names, addresses, levels of office, and jurisdictions. Copies are available for $10.00 from the Joint Center.

* * *

The second edition of the *JCPS Congressional District Fact Book* is now available also, and it promises to be an even more valuable source of information than the first one. The earlier edition, published in 1984, was hailed as a unique compact source of demographic, political, and socio-economic data on the states and congressional districts. Tables in the *Fact Book* also highlight the top 10 districts in several different categories (e.g., percentages of women in the work force, of college students, and of public-transit users). The new *Fact Book* has a redesigned format to make the material easier to use. Copies are available for $6.95 from the Joint Center. ■

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FOCUS

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'86 Elections Are Critical for Blacks

At stake: black candidates, Senate control and judicial appointments, South Africa policy

Unique Coalition Awaits Outcome of Test Case

Green Light on Affirmative Action

Wealth Data Puts Black-White Gap in Sharp Focus

JCPS Political TrendLetter

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PERSPECTIVE

New Government Role Will Boost Voter Registration

In our democratic society we give a lot of lip service to the importance of registering to vote. All too often, though, we do very little to make it easy and convenient for citizens to register. But the times may be changing. There appears to be the beginning of a new trend towards getting state and local governments actively involved in encouraging and facilitating voter registration.

Last month, for example, a California Superior Court judge ordered workers in Los Angeles County social service and other offices to actively solicit the registration of voters while conducting regular business. If this decision is upheld on appeal, as many as 20,000 county employees may soon be deputized to reach out to unregistered Californians.

This ruling, the first in the nation to order government workers to solicit voter registration, should boost registration among minorities and low income residents whose registration rates are substantially below those of whites and other higher income residents. In his ruling, Judge Jack Newman acknowledged that a "substantial and identifiable class" of poor and minority people was underrepresented on the voter rolls.

The California decision is but the latest in a number of judicial, executive, and legislative responses to the need to make registration easier and more convenient. Last year, the New York Court of Appeals upheld Governor Mario Cuomo's 1984 executive order requiring state workers to solicit voter registration while carrying on their official duties. However, unlike in California, New York state workers cannot actually collect and turn in completed registration forms.

For the past 10 years, the state of Michigan has been conducting a voter registration program in its motor vehicle offices. When someone applies for a driver's license, he or she can also get a form to register and vote. It makes a lot of sense. And, of course, for some time now the legislatures of Michigan, Georgia, and several other states have authorized the deputizing of school officials to register high school students. Such actions have contributed to the dramatic success of Jesse Jackson's appeal to students to graduate with a diploma in one hand and a voter registration card in the other.

Black Americans should welcome these innovative measures and encourage other state and local governments to adopt them. These measures, coupled with vigorous enforcement of the Voting Rights Act and a growing determination by blacks to exercise their political clout, have led to a sharp increase in black voter registration.

In the 1982 mid-term election the black-white registration gap was only 6.5 percentage points, down from 11.4 points in 1966. In the 1984 presidential election the gap was only 3.3 points, down from 9.2 points in 1968.

Continued growth in black voter registration is a prerequisite to the full exercise of our political clout, and we should support any measures which open wider the doors to the voting booth. The rest is up to us.

Eddie N. Williams

PRESIDENT

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Unique Coalition Awaits Outcome of Test Case

by M. Carl Holman

Before very long we will know whether both houses of Congress are going to pass—and whether President Reagan will sign—new housing legislation which would significantly increase the power of public housing tenants to control their lives and the places where they live.

The fate of the legislation will also test the effectiveness of a most unusual ad hoc alliance of black and white conservatives, liberals, and moderates—some of them politicians and some of them leaders of national and local community-based organizations.

Seeking Common Ground

Last December, a small group of blacks who do not normally come together spent several hours in my living room seeking some patches of common ground on which they might meet in trying to help poor blacks improve their life chances. The group included Robert Woodson, chairman of the Council for a Black Economic Agenda and president of the National Center for Neighborhood Enterprise, along with three other members of the Council—Robert Hill, Kujaatele Kweli, and Paul Pryde. Representing the National Black Leadership Roundtable were myself; Congressman Walter Fauntroy of the District of Columbia, chairman of the Roundtable; and Evelyn Moore, executive director of the National Black Child Development Institute.

The meeting I hosted had two objectives: to clarify points of consensus and disagreement on some of the Council's proposals for meeting the needs of low-income blacks, and to reduce the likelihood that the largely dysfunctional personal attacks and counter-attacks that followed Woodson's first meeting with President Reagan would be repeated.

The exchange in my living room was at points a good deal warmer than the December weather outside—especially on such issues as educational vouchers—but never hostile. While most of the members of the Council do not wholly discount the need for government intervention, they strongly support self-help as the basic answer to the predicament of the black underclass. Though most members of the Black Leadership Roundtable are pledged to the support of their "Black Family Plan" with its heavy emphasis on self-determination, most leaders of the 150 organizations in the Roundtable would also insist on much stronger and much more positive action by the federal government than is now in vogue.

Cooperative Action

Before our meeting was over, we agreed that the one issue on which we could and should cooperate was mobilizing support for the then-pending resident management provisions of the 1986 Housing Act. Representatives Fauntroy and Jack Kemp (R-N.Y.) thereafter met with groups of tenant leaders convened by Woodson and agreed to serve as cosponsors of each other's amendments. Members of the Roundtable, the Black Leadership Forum, and the Council for a Black Economic Agenda—along with others across the political and organizational spectrum—were provided with information designed to help generate that "arithmetic of power" of which Fauntroy so often speaks.

But it was the kind of arithmetic provided by the public housing tenant leaders from Washington's Kenilworth-Parkside development and from Boston, St. Louis, and elsewhere that enabled the coalition to form so readily around this issue.

> ***The one issue on which we could agree to cooperate was mobilizing support for the then-pending resident management provisions of the 1986 Housing Act.***

It is, after all, rather hard to gainsay their achievement of six-figure surpluses in rent collections, lower operating costs, a 50 percent decrease in the number of residents on welfare, programs that have enabled youngsters to choose college over dropping out, and continuing campaigns that have lowered teenage pregnancy, crime, vandalism, and drug abuse.

The alliance, so far, is holding. But there is considerable concern that external factors—budget deficits, White House opposition to any housing legislation, congressional priorities—may deny poor people in public housing the modest victory so many of them have richly earned. ■

The author is president of the National Urban Coalition.

Wealth Data Puts Black-White Gap in Sharp Focus

by William O'Hare

The Census Bureau's recent revelation of the scant amount of wealth controlled by black Americans dramatically illustrates the continuing sting of past racism. As shocking as it is to note that white household wealth is 12 times that of blacks, these gross figures mask a frightening racial disparity that will continue into the 21st century.

Of the many indicators commonly used to measure the economic gap between blacks and whites, the most illuminating may be the data on wealth inequality. To be sure, average income and the poverty rate are useful, but they overstate the gains made by blacks. The data on wealth differences—recently released by the Census Bureau—show much more clearly that blacks still lag far behind whites in gaining a fair share of the American economic pie.

> ***These numbers are particularly disturbing because wealth is a better measure of economic status than income or poverty levels.***

While the median wealth of white households is *12 times* that of black households, white income is "only" double black income, and the poverty rate for whites is "only" a third the black rate.

The startling fact is that over half of black households have less than $5,000 in accumulated assets. For these families there is no economic cushion for hard times.

Even blacks with greater assets are not cushioned from economic shocks. Three quarters of black wealth consists of equity in a house or car, compared to only half of white wealth. Thus, whites can more readily convert assets to cash by withdrawing savings or selling stocks, but blacks' assets are not so easily convertible.

Because net worth measures assets that have been accumulated over a lifetime (such as equity in a house or car, savings, stocks etc.), this index is a vivid reminder that past discrimination has a major impact on current economic well-being. For example: a 60-year-old black man in the 1980s probably entered the job market (in the 1940s) at a time when 94 percent of black households had earnings below the poverty line. In 1950, when this hypothetical black man was in his prime earning years, only one-fifth of black males aged 25-29 had finished high school. By the late 1960s, when the civil rights gains were opening up society to blacks, our hypothetical black man was about 40 years old and probably entrenched in a low-paying marginal job. Over the course of this man's lifetime he had precious few resources with which to accumulate assets.

But what about younger blacks? Though their prospects are better than those of our hypothetical 60-year-old man (the black poverty rate had "declined" to 40 percent by 1980), there are numerous reasons why the wealth gap will remain large for the forseeable future:

- Only one of six black households has any discretionary income, compared to one of three white households, and when such discretionary income does exist, it is lower among black households (discretionary income averages $8,555 in black households and $10,661 in white households);
- Fewer young blacks than young whites will inherit any assets from their parents. The impact of past discrimination is perpetuated in this way, as new generations of whites inherit the benefits of the economic advantages their parents enjoyed;
- The wealth gap is also likely to be perpetuated through ongoing and pervasive residential isolation. Most blacks still live in all-black neighborhoods where the primary demand for black-owned homes is from other blacks, who typically have below-average incomes. Black-owned homes, thus, are not likely to appreciate as rapidly as white-owned homes, which are sought by other whites and higher income blacks. The consequence is a diminution of the equity in black-owned homes (between 1979 and 1984, the average equity in black-owned homes dropped from $36,611 to $29,914, while the equity for whites rose from $50,939 to $51,939).

These numbers are particularly disturbing because wealth is a more stable and comprehensive measure of economic status than income or poverty levels. Income may vary from week to week or year to year, but wealth accurately reflects economic status and the availability of resources. ■

The author is associate director of research at JCPS.

August 1986

POLITICAL TRENDLETTER

In This Issue

- Wayne County Executive WILLIAM LUCAS defeated millionaire businessman DICK CHRYSLER in the Michigan Republican gubernatorial primary by a 44-34 margin. If Lucas wins in November, he'll become the nation's first black governor.
- Georgia's 5th district will elect a black Congressman—most likely JULIAN BOND or JOHN LEWIS.
- ALTON R. WALDON, JR., was sworn-in as the new U.S. congressman from New York's 6th congressional district to complete the term of the late JOSEPH ADDABBO.
- Black "firsts" continued to make history in elections in Alabama, New York, Virginia, Michigan, and Mississippi.
- MARTIN LUTHER KING III is seeking his first political office—a seat on the Fulton County Commission.
- In Louisiana's 8th congressional district primary race, black attorney FAYE WILLIAMS is running a strong race against four white males.

Michigan Republicans Choose Lucas for Governor

Wayne County Executive **WILLIAM LUCAS** moved **one step closer to becoming the nation's first black governor** after a come-from-behind win over millionaire businessman **DICK CHRYSLER** in the Michigan Republican primary. Lucas, who **had trailed by as much as 12 percentage points just last month,** won 78 percent of the vote in Wayne County and also led in downstate cities like Kalamazoo and Bay City. **Exit polls showed he got 41 percent of the white Republican vote and 66 percent of the black Republican vote**—compared to Chrysler's 35 percent and 24 percent, respectively. The polls also showed Lucas benefited from press disclosures of an unemployment compensation scandal involving employees of Chrysler's auto customizing firm; of the voters who made up their minds in the last week of the campaign, one-third said they had favored Chrysler but voted for Lucas. . . . **Lucas, a fiscal conservative and abortion foe, is a former Democrat who switched to the Republican party in May 1985.** His candidacy has **been endorsed by a wide spectrum of Republicans,** from television evangelist and presidential hopeful **PAT ROBERTSON** to former Governor **WILLIAM MILLIKEN.** . . . In the November general election **Lucas will face the popular incumbent, Governor WILLIAM BLANCHARD, who easily won the Democratic primary by a margin of 94 percent to 6 percent.** Blanchard is expected to campaign on the theme that during his governorship the state budget went from a deficit in 1983 to a modest surplus in 1986. For Lucas to win, he must receive the traditional conservative support won by gubernatorial candidate **RICHARD HANDLESS** in 1982 and split the Wayne County vote. Though **Blanchard seems certain to have the edge at this time, the Republican's chances cannot be discounted;** in 1982 Blanchard had a big early lead but wound up winning with just 51 percent of the vote.

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Old Friends Now Foes in Atlanta

Democratic voters in Georgia's 5th congressional district are set to make the **difficult choice between civil rights veterans JULIAN BOND and JOHN LEWIS**—which prompted Atlanta Mayor **ANDY YOUNG** to say, **"whoever wins, the district cannot lose."** Young continued, "This is what the movement was all about, to choose from the best of us." . . . **Polls show Bond with a lead** of between 10 to 30 points, perhaps enough to avoid a runoff, **but the hard-working Lewis cannot be counted out of the race:** he is reportedly walking across the entire 5th district talking, shaking hands, and spending the night at constituents' homes. . . . **Other candidates in the Democratic primary race**—who might receive enough votes to force a runoff—are businessman **CHARLES JOHNSON** and social activist **JAN DOUGLASS.** Johnson has pitched his campaign toward affluent whites and black professionals; his only endorsements are from local business groups. Douglass has been endorsed by national feminist leaders **GLORIA STEINEM, SHIRLEY CHISHOLM, and MAXINE WATERS.** . . . **On the Republican side, black newspaper woman PORTIA SCOTT faces former Atlanta policeman DAVID YOOD** (who is white). Scott is the favorite among Republicans, but most observers say she would face an uphill struggle to defeat the Democratic nominee in this urban, 65 percent black, Democratic district.

Black Political "Firsts"

Several blacks made history in June and July by **winning offices never before held by black Americans.** In **New York's** 6th congressional district (Queens), 49-year-old attorney **ALTON R. WALDON, Jr.,** has already been sworn in as the district's **first black U.S. congressman,** temporarily becoming the 21st member of the Congressional Black Caucus. Waldon, who narrowly won a special election, will complete the term of the late **JOSEPH ADDABBO.** Waldon, elected to the New York State Assembly in 1982 and again in 1984, must now win the September 9 Democratic primary, where he will be challenged by three black candidates: **SIMEON GOLAR, HULBERT JAMES, AND REV. FLOYD FLAKE.** The victorious Democrat must face Republican **RICHARD DIETO** in the November general election.

In the Democratic primary election for commissioner of **Lee County, Alabama,** former Boy Scout Master **ALBERT CHAMBERS of Opelika, Alabama, defeated former Auburn (Ala.) Councilman LINDBURGH JACKSON.** Chambers will have no Republican opposition in the general election and will become **Lee County's first black commissioner.** Lee County is 24.4 percent black.... Also in Alabama, **the whites-only era on the state board of education is about to end. WILLIE PAUL,** a retired Air Force officer who headed Montgomery's Head Start program, won the Democratic nomination in District 5 (a Black Belt district with a 56 percent black population), and **ETHEL HALL,** a professor at the University of Alabama, won the Democratic nomination in District 4 (in Jefferson County, black population 45 percent). Both defeated white opponents, and neither faces Republican opposition in the general election. They will become the **first blacks on the board of education since the 1870s.**... In Decatur, Alabama, **RUSSELL PRIEST** has been appointed to the city council. He is **Decatur's first black city councilman.**

In **Newport News, Virginia** (31.5 percent black), councilwoman **JESSIE RATTLEY** became the **first woman and first black mayor.... Suffolk,** Virginia (47.7 percent black), also elected its **first black mayor, JOHNNIE MIZELLE; its first black school superintendent, MACK BENN, JR.; and, for the first time, elected a majority of blacks to the city council.**

In **Southfield, Michigan** (a Detroit suburb with a 9.1 percent black population), sales executive **ERIC COLEMAN became the first black elected to the board of education.** Coleman won a four-year term with a two-to-one margin over his nearest opponent.

In **Drew, Mississippi, CLEVE MCDOWELL,** a lawyer and the state field director of the NAACP, is expected to become the **first black elected to the board of aldermen.** McDowell is unopposed in the November general election.

Across the Nation

Alabama

HANK SANDERS, a black state senator (District 23), **won his reelection bid against challenger ANDREW HAYDEN,** black mayor of Uniontown. **Sanders sponsored legislation that changed the method of electing commissioners and school board members in five counties from at-large to single-member district elections.** Hayden's support among whites was very strong; he was heavily financed by white businessmen. All he had to do was capture one of every four black voters in this 69 percent black district, but that was a mountain he couldn't climb. **Sanders carried seven of the eight counties in the senatorial district,** losing only Hayden's home county by 552 votes.

District of Columbia

At-large Councilmember **CAROL SCHWARTZ, a white Republican, is poised to challenge two-term black Mayor MARION BARRY** (D), who has only token Democratic opposition, in his reelection bid. Other candidates have entered the race, but **Schwartz is expected to be Barry's only major competition.** Barry is heavily favored to win (registered Democrats outnumber Republicans 10 to 1 in Washington, D.C., and blacks make up 70 percent of the population); yet **Schwartz cannot be counted out. In 1982 she upset veteran Councilman JERRY MOORE,** a prominent black minister and popular Republican. . . . **Not all white politicians in D.C. are underdogs,** however. In the race for council chair, a *Washington Post* poll shows incumbent D.C. **Council Chairman DAVID CLARKE holding about a three-to-one lead over former Councilmember DOUGLAS MOORE,** who is black. Clark has a lead of more than two to one among black voters.

Georgia

MARTIN LUTHER KING III, son of the late civil rights leader, **is making his first bid for political office,** seeking a seat on the Fulton County Commission from District 1, which includes Atlanta. His opponent, incumbent **MILTON FARRIS,** is an 80-year-old white veteran of politics who has served in elective office for more than 30 years, and the district is majority white. **Consequently, most political observers report that King has an uphill fight on his hands—nothing new to the King family.**

Illinois

Chicago Mayor **HAROLD WASHINGTON has captured control of the city council** through the victory of four council candidates he backed in special elections. (The wards were redrawn to increase black and Hispanic voting strength.) The result was a **25-to-25 tie between the Harold Washington camp and that of his archrival Alderman EDWARD R. VRDOLYAK** (chairman of the Cook County Democratic Central Committee), **with Washington holding the deciding vote.** Since gaining control of the council in May, Washington has tightened his hold on the city government in a number of ways, including reorganizing and restaffing council assignments, city boards, and commissions.

Louisiana

In the 8th congressional district primary race, attorney **FAYE WILLIAMS is strengthening her bid to join Congresswoman CARDISS COLLINS** (D-Ill.) and become one of only two black women in Congress. **Williams has received endorsements from several prominent organizations, including the Women's Campaign Fund, the Congressional Black Caucus, the National Black Leadership Roundtable, and several AFL-CIO affiliated unions.** Her campaign has raised more than $125,000. Williams, whose campaign theme is "Send a Friend to Congress," is **contending with four white males.** The polls show her running third overall but first in one-third of the parishes. Most political observers say this is still anybody's race and that **Faye Williams has a good chance of fighting her way into a November runoff election** (showdown between the two top vote getters) **if blacks register and vote for her in large numbers.**

Continued on next page

Maryland

Gubernatorial candidate **STEPHEN H. SACHS objected to a *Baltimore Sun* poll** because the key voter preference questions did not include the names of the candidates' running mates. **SACHS said his running mate, Congressman PARREN MITCHELL, was "central" to his campaign, and "not to ask voters' reaction [to him], you might as well be measuring a race for Governor of Kansas."** *The Sun* canceled publication of the poll, but denied that their methodology was improper. . . . **WENDELL HOLLOWAY,** a black lobbyist for Ford Motor Company, **is competing with six white Democrats for the 8th congressional district seat** being vacated by Representative **MICHAEL BARNES.** Holloway contends that his experience as an aide to former black Congresswoman **YVONNE BURKE** makes him the only candidate who knows what it takes to be a congressman. Although **political analysts** rate Holloway over his opponents in their political debates, they **speculate that he lacks the financial resources needed to win** this district, which is only 10 percent black.

Massachusetts

In the 8th congressional district (Boston), black State Representative **MEL KING fell from second place in March to third place in June,** according to a Harrison-Goldberg poll. **JOSEPH KENNEDY II,** son of **ROBERT,** is still leading, with State Senator **GEORGE BACHRACH** now in second place.

North Carolina

Former Congressman **JAMES BROYHILL** (R), who was appointed recently to fill out the term of Republican Senator **JOHN EAST** (who committed suicide), is in a tight race against former Governor **TERRY SANFORD** (D) to hold on to the seat. Both candidates are white, but **the race may be decided by black voters.** A June *Charlotte Observer* poll shows Sanford ahead by 46 percent to 40 percent, but the poll did not sample a large enough number of blacks to predict how they will vote. At the **North Carolina Black Leadership Caucus's 10th annual conference last month, several blacks expressed frustration with Sanford and the Democratic Party** for their lack of support on a number of issues important to blacks in the state. **JESSE JACKSON endorsed Sanford,** however, and reminded his audience that Sanford had been moderate on racial issues when most Southern governors were staunch segregationists. **Other speakers said Broyhill's positions on judicial nominations and South Africa were against black interests. Broyhill's black staff and supporters hope their candidate's "economic development" message will help him win black votes.** Most observers conclude that despite tensions between blacks and the Sanford camp, the great majority of blacks will support him, and that Jackson's endorsement increases that likelihood.

South Carolina

Veteran public servant **JIM CLYBURN lost his bid for the Democratic nomination for secretary of state in the June 10th primary, shattering the chance for a black to be nominated for a statewide office in South Carolina for the first time this century.** The winner was the incumbent **JOHN CAMPBELL,** who won 53 percent of the vote to Clyburn's 47 percent. The margin of victory was only 4,500 votes. Clyburn concluded that it was "just too much to beat a century-old tradition."

Compiled by:
Linda Williams, Senior Research Associate;
Alfred Baltimore, Roster Clerk; and
Todd Shaw, Research Aide.

Green Light on Affirmative Action

All Justices Favor Race-Conscious Remedies

by Rory K. Little

Amid 17 separate opinions spread among four U.S. Supreme Court decisions on affirmative action this term, a somewhat astonishing result has gone unnoticed: the court has *unanimously* affirmed the lawfulness of non-victim-specific, race-conscious remedies under the Constitution. The variously stated limitations on this general holding will be, without doubt, the subject of future litigation. But the Court's singularity of opinion on the constitutional questions marks a significant turning point in affirmative action litigation.

By definition, affirmative action plans are those that allocate some benefit to members of a racial minority in situations where that benefit would, but for race, go to a member of a racial majority. The beneficiaries under affirmative action have generally not been identified as actual victims of past racial discrimination; instead, they are members of a class, their racial minority group.

Because of the lengthy gap between violation and remedy [Editor's note: 12 years in *Wygant*, 11 years in *Local 28*], the actual victims of specific discriminatory acts either have moved on or are virtually impossible to identify. Yet, huge imbalances—all-white workforces, for example—persist as a result of past discrimination. Class-based affirmative action plans, while admittedly an imperfect mechanism, are the best available remedies to address these realities.

Affirmative Answers

The judicial imposition of race-conscious affirmative action plans raises hard constitutional issues:

- While obviously repugnant, does past racial discrimination justify race-conscious action in reverse?
- May a race-conscious plan be ordered or adopted without judicial findings or admissions of past discrimination by one of the parties?

> ***Many legal challenges to affirmative action plans should be dropped. . . . The realistic view is that race-conscious plans will be analyzed with a presumption of validity.***

- May persons in the racial majority who are themselves innocent of any proven discrimination become no longer preferred in favor of individuals of the racial minority, due solely to past discrimination by others?
- May race-conscious relief be extended to people not proven to have been victims of discrimination in the past?

Decisions rendered in four cases this term answer all of these questions in the affirmative. The result, broadly stated, is that race-conscious plans implemented pursuant to solid evidence of past discrimination will be upheld, so long as they are not permanent or overly rigid, are tailored to meet some rational measure of compliance (i.e., the percentage of minorities in a relevant labor pool or community), and do not force innocent persons to lose *existing* property interests (jobs, apartments, and the like).

As a consequence, many legal challenges to affirmative action plans should be dropped. Although as a matter of legal theory, race-conscious remedies remain "inherently suspect," the realistic view is that race-conscious affirmative action plans will be analyzed with a presumption of validity, and challengers will have to demonstrate that certain restrictions stated by the Court have been exceeded. In Justice Sandra Day O'Connor's words, "As in any other suit, it is the [challengers] who must bear the burden" of proof.

The four decisions are *Wygant v. Board of Education*, 84-1340; *Local 28, Sheet Metal Workers v. EEOC*, 84-1656; *Local 93, Firefighters v. Cleveland*, 84-1999; and the less publicized but important *Bazemore v. Friday*, 85-93. When the dust of front-page publicity settles, it is likely that *Wygant* and *Sheet Metal Workers*, the lead constitutional and Title VII cases, will emerge as two of the most significant decisions of any recent term.

[Editor's note: Not all affirmative action issues have been resolved. In two recent actions, the U.S. Supreme Court agreed to hear two additional affirmative action cases in the next term, and ordered the reconsideration of a Fourth Circuit opinion upholding a minority set-aside plan.] ■

The author clerked for U.S. Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart (retired) during the 1984-1985 term. He is associated with the Washington, D.C., law firm of Miller, Cassidy, Larroca & Lewin. This article is reprinted by permission of the *National Law Journal*.

'86 Elections Are Critical for Blacks

At Stake: Black Candidates, Senate Control and Judicial Appointments, South Africa Policy

by Eddie N. Williams

In the ongoing drama of black political advancement, the stage is again set for black voters to test our political strength, to use the ballot to change policy, and to elect candidates who support our interests. The next act of this political drama takes place in just a few months, in the mid-term elections of 1986.

Mid-term elections usually are the doldrums of American politics. Registration and turn-out decline sharply and public attention flags. This year the political pundits are already lamenting what they believe will be an especially dull, off-year election, lacking in major national issues to command public attention.

Blacks, however, cannot afford to let their political guard down this year. The stakes for us are very high. A lot of major issues command our attention. We have an opportunity not only to elect more blacks to office, but to help determine which party will control the U.S. Senate. We have a chance to influence U.S. policies toward South Africa and, more broadly, to influence the character and direction of future social and economic policies. The challenge for us is to fully mobilize the black electorate to register and to vote on November 4.

This is not just another mid-term election year. Here are a few thoughts about what is at stake and what blacks can accomplish in the November elections.

1. We can and must ensure continued progress in winning elective offices. I need not persuade you of the importance of strengthening black voices in the seats of power at the local, state, and national levels. While our progress so far is encouraging and a source of great pride, we have a long way to go in order to approach equitable representation among elected officials.

The Joint Center recently announced that during the past year the number of black elected officials increased 6.1 percent, from 6,056 to 6,424. However, we still hold less than 1.5 percent of the elective offices in the country, and the current gains represent only a fraction of the political clout at our disposal. We must marshall a lot more of that clout.

This year an unprecedented number of black candidates are running for Congress—64 by our most recent count, 21 more than in 1984 and almost twice as many as in 1982. The 20 members of the Congressional Black Caucus are expected to win reelection. At least two additional black candidates will win congressional seats, and the number could be as high as three or four.

In addition, there are two major gubernatorial candidates (Tom Bradley in California and William Lucas in Michigan) not to mention the hundreds of other candidates seeking state and local offices. They all deserve our best efforts to get more blacks registered and available to support their candidacies.

> ***Blacks still hold less than 1.5 percent of the elective offices in the country—a fraction of the political clout at our disposal.***

2. The Senate races this year are another very important concern of the black community. One-third (34) of the Senate seats are being contested, and the control of the Senate is up for grabs.

The Senate races are of unusual importance to blacks. If President Reagan is to be denied a completely free hand in reshaping the federal judiciary in his image, we need a Senate that can be a restraining force.

The author is president of the Joint Center and chairman of the board of directors of the National Coalition on Black Voter Participation. This article is an abridged text of his plenary address at the National Urban League Convention in San Francisco on July 22, 1986.

The administration's record of judicial appointments to date is one of the gloomiest aspects of the Reagan era for blacks. Partly because President Carter was unsuccessful in making several appointments to the federal bench in his final weeks in office, President Reagan has had an unusual opportunity to appoint judges. So far he has appointed 262 judges—about one-third of the entire federal judiciary. Before leaving office, he could have a chance to appoint more than half of all federal judges. We face the real danger that a conservative federal bench, hostile to civil rights and oblivious to the needs of the poor, will be entrenched for years after this administration leaves office.

To protect our interests, we need to scrutinize the candidates for the 34 Senate seats being contested this November. The black vote could be critical in a number of these elections because of its size and the closeness of the races. For example, North Carolina, Alabama, Louisiana, Florida, Pennsylvania, Georgia, Missouri, and California have vigorously contested Senate races in which a large black voter turnout can be decisive.

We face the real danger that a conservative federal bench, hostile to civil rights and the needs of the poor, will be entrenched for years after this administration leaves office.

We need to know where these candidates stand on our issues and how they will appraise judicial appointments. Don't be put off by vague responses like "Well, I'll have to see who is nominated" or "Now, understand, I'm going to vote on the merits." We must demand to know where candidates stand on specific issues and what specific criteria they will use in assessing judicial appointments.

By the way, *all* candidates, whether for the Senate, the House, or state and local offices, should be held to this standard. Even if they cannot vote for national policies or judicial appointments, they can influence congressional votes and executive decisions through the political clout they wield and the public opinion they can mobilize.

3. The 1986 elections also provide an opportunity for blacks to use their votes as a "two-by-four" to get the administration's attention appropriately focused on South Africa. The House of Representatives did just that last month when it passed Ron Dellum's bill to clamp a comprehensive trade enbargo on South Africa and to require all American companies to leave that country within six months of its passage. A similar bill has been introduced in the Senate and momentum is growing for its consideration.

The South Africa issue also lends itself to domestic electoral politics. In addition to protesting against apartheid and against the administration's coddling of the racist regime in South Africa, we should back up our words with our votes in the 1986 elections.

In November voters can make a clear, strong statement about U.S. South Africa policy. All candidates who get our votes, regardless of their post or level of office, should be committed to the imposition of tough sanctions against South Africa.

All candidates who get our votes should be committed to the imposition of tough sanctions against South Africa.

We can indeed demonstrate real clout if we dramatically increase the level of black voter participation. This year the National Coalition on Black Voter Participation is seeking to register 1.5 million new voters and to assure that at least 9 million black voters turnout on November 4. These may appear to be modest goals and indeed they are, given the dimensions of the problems we seek to address. But achieving these goals will not be easy. They would be the highest levels that blacks ever reached in a mid-term election. They would come close to equaling the white rates in 1982.

While we must not underestimate our political potential, we also must not underestimate the task of fully achieving it. Surely, now is the time for us to draw upon all of our individual, collective, and institutional strengths to fully mobilize the black vote. Surely, now is the time for us to marshal the resources needed to strengthen the National Coalition on Black Voter Participation, the National Urban League, and all other organizations actively involved in voter mobilization.

Special attention must be given to mobilizing the young and the poor. While we understand the circumstances that lead to their political disillusionment and apathy, the stakes are too high in 1986 and 1988 for us to excuse anybody who can fill out a registration form and mark a ballot. We must develop creative strategies to involve the young and the poor more actively in our quest for political empowerment.

Our leaders and institutions must find ways to motivate our people to register and vote today as intensely as they marched and protested in the sixties.

This is an enormous challenge, but we are equal to it. We can use our political power massively and ingeniously as an effective instrument of self-help.

Our own initiative and determination may well become the spark that ignites a national response to the distressing problems of poverty and joblessness. In any event, by our own initiative and determination we will continue to be true to our history, our values, and our own moral purpose. ■

TELESCOPE

JOBLESS RATE FOR BLACK GRADS RISES TO PEAK IN 1982, DROPS

by Lynn Burbridge

Even the good news on black unemployment trends is now turning sour. College-educated blacks used to be rapidly absorbed into the labor force and provided a silver lining to an otherwise gloomy cloud. For instance, in 1980, their unemployment rate was "only" 4.4 percent, compared to the overall black rate of 13.4 percent. Moreover, their unemployment rate dropped to 4 percent in 1981, while the rate for college-educated whites rose from 1.9 percent in 1980 to 2.3 percent in 1981.

Beginning in 1982, however, educated blacks' silver lining started to lose its gleam. The unemployment rate for blacks with four or more years of college jumped an incredible 108 percent, from 4 percent to 8.3 percent, according to the U.S. Department of Labor.

Even worse, while the unemployment rates for all other groups (black and white) peaked in 1983 and have since declined to their 1981 levels, the rate for college-educated blacks came down to only 5.8 percent in 1985—still above the 1981 level.

What explains this alarming turn of events? Though no definitive answers are available, the likely explanations are that:

1) black college graduates had less job seniority and were thus more vulnerable to being bumped in a layoff during the 1981-83 recession;

2) blacks are more dependent on government employment and were disproportionately harmed by the cutbacks which occurred at the national and local levels; and

3) given the Reagan administration's antipathy to affirmative action, businesses may have felt less pressure to hire young blacks into the better paying jobs. ■

The author, until recently a research associate at the Joint Center, is now an economist at the Urban Institute.

SENATE CONSIDERS FISCAL SAFETY NET FOR NEEDY COMMUNITIES

General Revenue Sharing is slated to expire at the end of FY 1986, but Senator David Durenberger (R-Minn.) has introduced S.2037, a bill to create a new need-based general purpose fiscal assistance program called Targeted Financial Assistance (TFA). According to Senator Durenberger, "The national government can no longer afford to share its revenues with wealthy cities and communities, but neither can it afford to neglect communities crippled by federal aid cuts . . ."

In his testimony on S.2037, Dr. Milton D. Morris, director of research at the Joint Center, was generally supportive of the TFA proposal but raised two main concerns. His first was that the budget for revenue sharing was $5.7 billion while TFA called for expenditures of only $2.3 billion—"the very minimum that can qualify as a reasonable response to the problems we seek to address."

His other concern was that the bill's current sponsors— mostly farm-state senators—not neglect the plight of millions of chronically poor urban dwellers: "America simply cannot afford to tolerate the unchecked growth of [the urban] underclass permanently cut off from the opportunity structures of the society."

[Editor's note: A copy of his testimony may be obtained by calling JCPS at (202) 626-3500.] ■

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A Crisis of Faith in Education?

Young Blacks Internalize Message That "Excellence Is for Others"

Blacks and the Religious Right Have Few Common Interests

Polls, History Show That Alliance Is Unlikely

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Perspective

Black Electorate Is More Independent, Less Predictable

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PERSPECTIVE

Black Electorate Has Become More Independent, Less Predictable

Although the overwhelming majority of blacks (76 percent) identify themselves as Democrats, there are growing signs that the black electorate is becoming more flexible, less predictable. If these trends continue, they could significantly affect future voting patterns and political party alignment.

In a number of elections throughout the country black voters appear to be more open to appeals from candidates other than Democrats. While this is good news for the Republicans, there is little evidence that the GOP will harvest a bumper crop of blacks anytime soon. But the prospect could change if the already high level of black frustration with the Democratic party continues to rise. Not only are black Democrats complaining about the way their leaders and candidates are treated, but they also generally believe they will be the inevitable losers as the party seeks to win back the white South.

Another indication that the prospect could change is that we are beginning to see a conspicuous number of blacks switching from the Democrats to the Republicans. While the conversion of Michigan's William Lucas captured national headlines, less publicized conversions have been taking place throughout the country, and many of the new black Republicans have significant constituencies and influence in their communities.

Another factor that will influence black voting behavior is the growth of a black middle class that is more independent and less motivated by political tradition. Perhaps of even greater significance is the emergence of a large number of black voters who are under the age of 30 and who are bringing new attitudes, demands, and allegiances into the political arena. Of the 19 million blacks who are eligible to vote, 37 percent of them are under 30. They are somewhat removed from the intense civil rights battles that dominated partisan politics, especially between 1964 and 1972, and they have considerably less loyalty to the Democratic party than their parents and grandparents.

Yet another indication of change in black political attitudes is the campaign styles of black candidates who seek to gain white votes while retaining their black support. These styles may be seen in the campaigns of Tom Bradley, Virginia Lieutenant Governor Doug Wilder, New Orleans Mayor Sidney Barthelemy, and more recently, John Lewis, who won the Democratic nomination in Atlanta's 5th congressional district with about 80 percent of the white vote. These politicians, among many others, underscore the importance of coalition politics, especially in jurisdictions with a majority or a large number of white voters.

If all these trends continue, they could have major ramifications. They could produce divergent views among blacks about goals and methods, especially on economic and civil rights issues. They could result in more blacks leveraging their votes between the two parties or pursuing independent political strategies. And those trends could lead strong black candidates, like Julian Bond and John Lewis, to compete more with one another for office.

Under these circumstances, the black vote could become a more tempting target for coalition-building and especially for those Republicans who are determined to make their party strong and competitive nationally. At the same time, the Democratic party might be persuaded not to move so precipitously and clumsily in trying to distance itself from the black electorate.

Eddie N. Williams

PRESIDENT

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A Crisis of Faith in Education?

Young Blacks Internalize Message That ''Excellence Is for Others''

by Clifton R. Wharton

Editor's note: In a plenary address to the National Urban League on July 21, 1986, Dr. Wharton discussed several crisis-proportion trends in education for blacks. He said high school dropout rates have become "obscenely high," college enrollment has dropped, fewer students than in the 1970s are going to graduate and professional school, and "far too few" graduate students are going into high-demand fields: in 1984, "Blacks received 15 Ph.D's in engineering, 13 in business administration, 11 in physics, 4 in mathematics, and 3 in computer science."

Dr. Wharton's view is that, to a large extent, young blacks have been disabled by a negative self-image: "What we are doing is telling them, in a hundred whispered or unspoken ways each day, that we do not really believe in them."

The following is an excerpt from his address.

On most college campuses we have a set of euphemisms. One is "educationally disadvantaged." Another is "academically unprepared." Yet another is "full-opportunity admit." By and large, these clumsy, unlovely phrases are almost universally interpreted to mean one thing. What they mean is "black."

The reverse is also true. Ask any faculty senate or administrative committee about black students, and they will immediately begin to tell you more than you could possibly wish to know about special admission tracks, free tutoring, development counseling, remedial reading labs, and all the other pedagogic paraphernalia associated with, not to put too fine a point on things, academic deficiency.

These views ignore the fact that many black students meet the same standards as all the rest without the slightest need for outside help or special dispensations. They ignore the fact that on most predominantly white campuses, nonminority students far outnumber the minorities in remedial classes. They ignore the facts. The link between blacks and deficiency is as unthinking and as reflexive as the link between deficiency and blacks. It is a stereotype that has taken on a life of its own.

> ***The link between blacks and deficiency is reflexive and unthinking. . . . It is a stereotype with a life of its own.***

The stereotype lives in the minds of many, perhaps even the majority, of Americans. It lives in the press. It lives in Hollywood and on TV. The stereotype also lives in the speeches of too many of our black public officials and political figures, for whom antidiscrimination and antipoverty programs are perennial issues while industrial development and national trade competitiveness are somebody else's problem. And, most to the point, the stereotype is alive—and growing stronger every day—in the minds of our black young people.

Through images, representations, the very structure of language, our society sends an overwhelming message to today's black youth: "Excellence is for other folks. Not you." In one breath we decry Jensen's idiotic theories of black intellectual inferiority; in the next we act as though he might be right.

I would like to be able to say that education is an exception to this corrosive assault—but it is not. From the first day of first grade to the moment when the last strains of "Pomp and Circumstance" fade into silence, many and perhaps most of our schools, colleges, and graduate institutions beat the same dreary drum.

Start in kindergarten. Set up "slow" classes to homogenize the classrooms. Pass the "slow" kids anyway, whether they've learned the material or not. Just make sure they know they're getting by "because they're black."

Design "aptitude tests" and academic tracking for the "culturally impoverished." Hire guidance counsellors who automatically, even benignly, steer black youngsters away from college, toward jobs immediately after high school, or at best toward technical curricula leading to jobs with low ceilings of advancement.

Demand dual college admissions standards—better yet, lobby for a tacit but real lowering of academic standards for graduation, graduate school admission, and professional certification.

And so on. And so on.

It is all reverse discrimination, in

Continued on next page

Dr. Wharton is chancellor, State University of New York, and chairman of the Rockefeller Foundation Board of Directors.

Young Blacks Internalize Message That "Excellence Is for Others"

Continued from previous page

the only sense of that foolish phrase with any real meaning: discrimination by default, discrimination as the abdication of responsibility. And I must ask: Do we think that by these shabby devices we're doing black youngsters a service? A *favor?* No. What we're doing is telling them, in a hundred whispered or unspoken ways each day, that we do not really believe in them. Is it any wonder so many of them are unable to believe in themselves?

It is hard to determine, and even harder to prove, just how thoroughly the individual's ability to compete, to excel, and to achieve is shaped by self-image—which is, of course, closely tied to the perceptions and expectations of the individual exhibited by others. But there is a large and growing body of empirical research data supporting the common-sense view that self-respect is critical to self-realization.

Do we think by these shabby devices we're doing black youngsters a service? A* favor*? No.

In a recent issue of the *New Republic,* two black writers summed it up as follows:

> Negative expectancy [among black youth] first tends to generate failure through its impact on behavior, and then induces the individual to blame the failure on lack of ability. . . . This misattribution in turn becomes the basis for a new negative expectancy. By this process the individual, in effect, internalizes the low estimation originally held by others. . . [This internal low expectation] powerfully affects future competitive behavior and future results.

Empirical research data supports the common-sense view that self-respect is critical to self-realization.

Over the last several years, I have nursed a growing conviction that one of the most urgent needs for black youngsters is a broad-based effort to foster stronger, more competitive, achievement-oriented self-images.

I must stress that the need is by no means universal. Studies undertaken by Professor Walter Allen at the University of Michigan show the other side of the coin. His 1982 survey of 902 black undergraduates at predominantly white institutions found that the students did not fit the stereotypic profile. Indeed, they held high aspirations and strong self-esteem:

> Sixty-three percent. . . expressed "above average" or "high" levels of self-confidence. Most students, 59%, thought they were above average or high in leadership abilities. And 76% said that overall they were high or above-average people.

It takes only a moment's reflection to realize that these findings do not refute, but rather confirm, my larger thesis. For the fact is that Professor Allen's respondents were *not* the high school dropouts, *not* the youngsters who never enrolled in college, but rather the self-selected successes—the survivors. Already admitted to institutions with formidable academic standards, they represented the survivors of a war of educational attrition. And not surprisingly, they succeeded because they had good high school records and came from stable, well-educated, middle-class families.

Such youngsters are thus the classic exceptions who prove the rule. But the majority of their peers—the majority of our young people, from kindergarten on—cry out for a massive infusion of self-esteem. . . from our society as a whole, but most directly from the black community itself.

Editor's note: In the balance of his address, Dr. Wharton calls for a return to the "tight-knit, supportive, and demanding families" that "were a prominent part of black America during the first half of this century." He says, "We need strategies not to replace affirmative action and judicial activism, but to augment them. While pressing the traditional lines of attack, we also need to open a second front."

To obtain the full text of his address, please contact the Office of the Chancellor, State University of New York, State University Plaza, Albany, N.Y. 12246. ■

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POLITICAL TRENDLETTER

Inside This Issue

- **The 21 members of the Congressional Black Caucus have effectively used the congressional committee system to advance the interests of blacks as well as of their other constituents.**
- **In a stunning upset, John Lewis defeated Julian Bond to gain the Democratic nomination in Georgia's 5th congressional district.**
- **Large numbers of blacks are running in statewide races, but few have a chance to win.**
- **Four black Southerners are making a strong bid to be elected to Congress, from Georgia's 5th district, Virginia's 1st, Mississippi's 2d, and Louisiana's 8th.**

Black Caucus Rises to Leadership in Congress

> *"Give us the ballot and we will no longer have to worry the federal government about our basic rights. . .We will no longer plead—we will write the proper laws on the books."*
> *Dr. MARTIN LUTHER KING, Washington, D.C., May 17, 1957*

Three decades after Dr. King spoke those words, the record shows the **Congressional Black Caucus (CBC)** energetically at work to give truth to his prophecy. Consider the following:

- In the months after President Reagan's reelection in 1984, when the leadership of both parties in Congress proposed deep cuts in social spending, the CBC was ready: BILL GRAY (D-PA), **who had just become chairman of the powerful House Budget Committee, fought the battles inside the committee and CBC Chairman MICKEY LELAND (D-TX) put pressure on the House leadership to protect essential social programs. In the end, the Budget Committee restored more than $38 billion in cuts proposed by the Reagan administration.**

- **CBC members introduced over 18 bills to change U.S. policy toward South Africa, including the Anti-Apartheid Act of 1985, which the House of Representatives passed by a 297-217 margin, and the even stronger sanctions legislation, sponsored by Congressman RON DELLUMS (D-CA) and passed without opposition on June 17, 1986.**

- In an institution where power lies within the committee system, **CBC members are chairmen of seven committees: Budget, Education and Labor, Small Business, Narcotics, Hunger, District of Columbia, and Ethics.**

- **The 21 CBC members are strategically placed on all the major committees to maximize the group's effectiveness in monitoring all legislative matters.** Committees give legislators their "principal opportunity to shape national policy in detail" and CBC members have done just that: for example, PARREN MITCHELL (D-MD) **saved the Small Business Administration from the Reagan cuts;** JOHN CONYERS (D-MI) and GUS SAVAGE (D-IL) **attached a multi-billion-dollar "set-aside" program to the defense appropriations bill** (now in conference committee); JULIAN DIXON (D-CA) **pushed through defunding of the Civil Rights Commission,** based on a finding that the CRC was no longer non-partisan

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and objective under the chairmanship of Clarence Pendleton; CHARLES HAYES (D-IL) **introduced legislation to help school dropouts;** CHARLES RANGEL (D-NY), in a national radio address, **called for increasing tax revenues to cut the deficit;** WALTER FAUNTROY (D-DC) **held oversight hearings on the Federal Reserve Board's domestic monetary policies;** and MICKEY LELAND (D-TX) **pressured President Reagan to increase "Food for Peace" spending from $200 million to $800 million.**

Though its numbers are small, the CBC appears to wield tremendous power in the 435-member House of Representatives. This has given the members a breezy confidence which is epitomized by nine-term Congressman BILL CLAY (D-MO), who said to *Congressional Quarterly:* **"We're in a position to protect ourselves. We don't have to go hat in hand begging anybody.** In fact, it's just the reverse. Now a lot of people have to come hat in hand asking for favors."

Upset in Atlanta: Lewis Defeats Bond

White voters, who make up 43 percent of the registered voters in Georgia's 5th congressional district, **played a pivotal role in handing John Lewis his stunning victory over the favored candidate, Julian Bond.** Lewis received 80 percent of the white vote and benefited from **an unusual coalition of southside poor and working-class blacks and North Atlanta's white middle class.**...The final tally was Lewis—52 percent, Bond—48 percent....**For years black Atlantans had used their swing vote to elect moderates over conservatives when faced with a choice of two white candidates; now, white Atlantans faced with two black candidates chose the moderate over the "radical."**...Lewis, who got only 40 percent of the black vote, campaigned on the theme that he was on the "people's slate," not the "black slate"; by contrast, **Julian Bond was perceived by white voters as being exclusively concerned with "an all-black agenda."**...Ironically, Bond's image as a radical may have been enhanced by his uncompromising stance during the 1982 reapportionment battle to make the 5th district majority black....**The emergence of two black candidates running against each other, rather than against a white, may be a maturing of black politics but this was a divisive, hard-fought battle that split the black community,** leaving wounds that may take a while to heal.

More Blacks Running Statewide

In the Democratic gubernatorial primary in Maryland, too, the black community divided its support rather than unite behind one ticket. **Parren Mitchell, the dean of black politics in Baltimore, had been expected to draw 80 percent of the black vote to the candidacy of Steve Sachs (with Mitchell as lieutenant governor), but post-election polls showed Sachs and Mitchell got only 58 percent black support.** In the final days of the campaign, Mitchell blasted black supporters of his opponents as "ersatz neo-Negroes" who are "betraying the current generation of black Baltimoreans and a future generation." In the final tally, **the Sachs-Mitchell ticket was soundly defeated, 2-1, by Baltimore Mayor Donald Schaefer and his running mate, Melvin Steinberg. (Schaefer's replacement as mayor of Baltimore in November will be Baltimore City Council President Clarence "Du" Burns, a black man.)**...In the Wisconsin Democratic primary for the U.S. Senate, GARY GEORGE, a state senator, came in third with 11 percent of the vote.

Others who have already lost in statewide elections, despite an impressive showing, are: state Senator REGIS GROFF, who ran for lieutenant governor of Colorado; state Senator TERRY WILLIAMS, the only black elected official in Utah, who sought the Democratic nomination for the U.S. Senate; and veteran public servant JIM CLYBURNE, who ran for secretary of state of South Carolina....**Senator Groff's defeat was a surprise: he had led in the early polls and had been endorsed by the state Democratic leadership and the *Denver Post;* his 12 years as a state senator and as a former floor leader of the senate Democrats supported his claim to be experienced and pragmatic;** and, although blacks are only 4 percent of Colorado's population, the state had previously elected a black lieutenant governor (**GEORGE L. BROWN** in 1975). **Yet, Groff lost, 59 to 42 percent, to a one-term state senator....The surprise in Utah was that Senator Williams, a liberal Democrat, ran a neck-**

and-neck race to get 48 percent of the Democratic vote in this conservative Mormon state, where less than 1 percent of the population is black. . . .Jim Clyburne says he lost because of the long tradition of southern whites not supporting black candidates and because of low black turnout. Clyburne broke even in about 12 counties with large black majorities but won handily in other counties that were majority white. He says black voters may have stayed away from the polls because many polling places were on farms that were part of the plantations of the Old South. **Undoubtedly, another obstacle for Clyburne was the fact that his opponent was an incumbent.**

The most important remaining statewide elections are in California and Michigan. In California, Mayor TOM BRADLEY still trails the incumbent, Governor GEORGE DEUKMEJIAN—by 11 percent in early August polls. Governor Deukmejian may have strengthened his position by supporting anti-apartheid divestment legislation (which he had opposed last year). . . . **Though WILLIAM LUCAS is more than 20 percentage points behind the incumbent Democratic governor in the Michigan gubernatorial race, his chances have been boosted by his leadership of a coalition of fundamentalist Christians and blacks, who gave him their "rapturous acclaim" (according to conservative columnists Rowland Evans and Robert Novak) at a state Republican party convention in August.**

The lessons to be learned from these efforts to gain statewide office are: 1) black candidates must be able to attract at least 40 percent of the white vote, since blacks are not a majority in any state; **2) black candidates who can boast a long record of experience in public office have better chances of winning—candidates should not make their first race a statewide one; and 3) black candidates generally need undivided black support and a high turnout to have a chance of winning.**

Across the Nation

District of Columbia

Mayor Marion Barry easily won renomination in the Democratic primary with 70 percent of the vote. Barry carried all the wards in the city, except for the predominantly white Ward 3. He will face at-large Councilmember Carol Schwartz, a white Republican, in the November election.

With one exception, all the black incumbent councilmembers up for reelection were renominated. The exception was 3-term Councilmember William R. Spaulding, who was defeated by novice Harry Thomas. Thomas was endorsed by Congressman Walter Fauntroy (D-DC) and benefited from Spaulding's opposition to rent control—a key issue in ward 5, which is one of the city's poorest.

Florida

Despite an aggressive campaign and endorsements by the National Organization for Women and the National Women's Political Caucus, **Barbara Greadington was defeated in the Democratic primary in Florida's 2nd congressional district.** Greadington, a black woman, is a former Parole and Probation Commission member (and one-time chair). The district is 24 percent black.

Georgia

Martin Luther King III won the Democratic primary for Fulton County Commissioner, Ralph Abernathy III lost his bid for the state House, and attorney Michael Thurmond scored an upset victory over the incumbent in the Democratic primary for the 67th district House seat (Clarke County), a district that is only 24 percent black.

Louisiana

In the 8th congressional district, **a poll conducted on September 3-4 showed Faye Williams, a black attorney, leading a pack of five candidates in the Democratic primary.** Williams received the support of 22 percent of those polled; 20 percent supported her nearest rival, Carson Killens. Williams got the support of 52 percent

Continued on next page

of the black respondents and 6 percent of the whites. **According to the *Shreveport Times*, Williams is the first black candidate ever to have a serious chance of winning this district.**

Maryland

The Mitchell political dynasty took a beating in the Democratic primaries. Parren Mitchell's loss in the statewide race (see page 2) was followed by his nephew **state senator Clarence Mitchell's third-place showing in the 7th congressional district primary. The winner of the primary, Baltimore city councilman Kweisi Mfume, will now meet the Republican nominee, Reverend St. George Crosse, in the November election.** Mfume was supported by poor and middle-class blacks and about 20 percent of whites. He is expected to win easily in this 70 percent black and heavily Democratic district. . . .The one Mitchell to win was Michael Mitchell, who won the primary to replace his brother Clarence in the state senate.

In Prince George's County, Howard University law professor Alex Williams scored an upset Democratic primary victory over the incumbent State's Attorney Arthur Marshall— who has been in office since 1962. The county, a Washington, D.C., suburb, has a growing (now about 40 percent) and increasingly influential black community.

Mississippi

In the 2nd district, which has the hottest congressional race in the state, Democratic **challenger Mike Espy says the election will come down to who is best organized.** According to political observers, Espy is far better organized now than he was for the Democratic primary, which he won. In this poor rural district, **he is emphasizing the farm crisis to attract the white vote. He is also charging Republican incumbent Webb Franklin with voting more for Wall Street interests than for those of his own constituency. Finally, he is seeking to boost black turnout.** If he can secure enough funds for television and radio advertising to do that, he is given a good chance of beating Franklin.

New York

In the 6th congressional district (Queens), **the three-month incumbent, Alton R. Waldon, Jr. (who won a special election in June), was defeated in the Democratic primary by the Reverend Floyd Flake—who had been endorsed by Mayor Ed Koch and *The New York Times*.** Flake garnered 48 percent of the vote to Waldon's 41 percent; the third- and fourth-place finishers were businessman Simeon Golar and community activist Hulbert James.

Pennsylvania

The Pittsburgh suburb of Wilkinsburg is only **39 percent black but has four black city councilmembers (Ronald J. Hill, Peter Mathis, Ralph Watson, and Jean Kirkland), a black borough manager (Andrew Dent), seven blacks (of nine members) on the school board, a black constable, and a black school superintendent.** According to Hill, the election of so many blacks is due to heavy black voter participation, use of a black slate, and the switch from an at-large to a ward system of elections. In contrast, Pittsburgh has an at-large system of council elections and no black councilmembers.

Virginia

In the Virginia 1st district (Tidewater region—Newport News), **state Senator Robert Scott is attempting to oust one-term GOP Congressman Herbert Bateman.** Blacks constitute approximately a third of the electorate. . . .**Informed sources say Scott's chances are exceptionally good, since Bateman's hold on this House seat is a tenuous one indeed.** These sources report that a private poll shows that a **meager 39 percent would support Bateman in the absence of a named opponent.** This extremely modest showing almost never bodes well for an incumbent. **What is more, voters divided evenly on the statement, "Herb Bateman has had his chances as Congressman; it's time for someone new." Forty-two percent agree with this statement, and forty-two percent disagree.**

CONTRIBUTORS: **LINDA WILLIAMS, Senior Research Associate; ALFRED BALTIMORE, Roster Clerk; and FREDRICK C. HARRIS, Research Assistant.**

Black elected officials in the United States, January 1986

In 1970, only 1,469 blacks held elective office; now, that number has more than quadrupled. Nevertheless, the position of blacks as elected officials remains largely unchanged. Black elected officials compose only 1.5 percent of all elected officials in the United States. In recent years, the rate of growth in the number of black elected officials has declined. And they hold few federal and statewide offices. Further growth in the number of black elected officials, therefore, is needed and will depend on the ability of black candidates to appeal to nonblack electorates.

Eddie N. Williams, president JCPS

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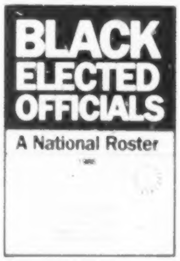
(To order, see p. 4)



		Federal		State			Substate Regional		County				Municipal					Judicial and Law Enforcement						Education			
	Total	Senators	Representatives	Administrators	Senators	Representatives	Members, Regional Bodies	Other Regional Officials	County Executives	Members, County Governing Bodies	Members, Other County Bodies	Other County Officials	Mayors	Members, Municipal Governing Bodies	Members, Municipal Boards	Members, Advisory Commissions	Other Municipal Officials	Judges, State Courts of Last Resort	Judges, Other Courts	Magistrates, Justices of the Peace, Constables	Other Judicial Officials	Police Chiefs, Sheriffs and Marshals	Other Law Enforcement Officials	Members, State Education Agencies	Members, University and College Boards	Members, Local School Boards	Other Education Officials
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Source: *Black Elected Officials: A National Roster, 1986*

Blacks and the Religious Right Have Few Common Interests

Polls, History Show That Alliance Is Unlikely

by Linda F. Williams

The history of American politics is filled with unlikely coalitions—none more so than the coalition of blacks and southern whites in the New Deal Democratic majority from 1936 (when black voters joined the coalition) to 1964 (when southern whites deserted it in droves). Today, blacks are searching for new coalitions that can accommodate their steadily increasing political power and that do not relegate their concerns to the back burner.

Many blacks, long dissatisfied with their treatment by the Democratic party, may support an independent presidential bid by Jesse Jackson. Others, including Jackson himself, have sought to reform the Democrats from within. Still others have wondered whether a post-Reagan Republican party can frame an appeal to black voters.

While these questions are simmering in the minds of black voters, one issue has come to a full boil: do blacks have a future in a coalition with the Religious Right, as has been suggested by the success of William Lucas in winning the Republican gubernatorial nomination in Michigan? Or, put another way, can the GOP build a new majority coalition that will include both the white Christian right and a substantial influx of blacks? This strategy has been embraced by conservative columnists Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, who wrote: "Welding blacks and evangelicals is the core of both Lucas's long-shot bid against popular Democratic Governor James Blanchard and the building of a new Republican party."

The question of whether Lucas can win by garnering Religious Right and black support will be answered on November 4. In the primary Lucas clearly did well with the Religious Right in Michigan, but the state's black voters are heavily Democratic, and few (approximately 7 percent, according to a Gordon S. Black exit poll) crossed party lines. Thus, the question of whether the support of the Religious Right will be unfortunate baggage for Lucas in wooing black voters remains to be answered.

The broader question is whether a black/Religious Right coalition is feasible in national politics. Even if a substantial number of blacks and the Religious Right in Michigan vote for Lucas, there will be no evidence that it is. Blacks who vote for Lucas because they genuinely support him or because they want to see him make history could well desert a white candidate endorsed by the Religious Right (just as many whites vote for liberal white Democrats but often refuse to support liberal black Democrats). Moreover, history and public opinion data tell us that a black/Religious Right coalition is unlikely.

The Rise of the Religious Right

The emergence of the Religious Right (the term is used to encompass the various religious groups pursuing a conservative social agenda; where more specific terms are used in the survey data, those terms will be used here as well) as a political force goes back at least to the late 1960s. It arose from fundamentalist Christian objections to numerous changes taking place in American culture and society, including changes in relations between the genders and between the races. In 1968 and 1972, the Religious Right was one of the key elements in the movement of northern ethnic Catholics and southern white Protestants away from presidential-level Democratic voting, at the same time that blacks were increasing their support for the Democratic party.

Watergate confused matters, enabling Jimmy Carter briefly to recoup for the Democrats and hold both blacks and a slim majority of white fundamentalists in the same party in 1976. But by the late 1970s, disillusionment with Carter had set in, and the Religious Right rose again with Catholic and Protestant whites conjoined in a unique political movement to support Ronald Reagan for president. By 1984, with the Democrats perceived as leaning toward the positions held by blacks, women, and gays, and the Republican national

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Dr. Williams is a senior research associate at the Joint Center.

platform adhering to the positions of the Religious Right, the pro-GOP trend surged, and Ronald Reagan's share of the fundamentalist/evangelical vote soared. Reagan's share of the white born-again Christian vote rose from 63 percent in 1980 to 80 percent in 1984, and his share of black support, already at a low 11 percent in 1980, fell even lower to 9 percent in 1984.

Thus, outside of the Carter aberration, every election since 1964 has shown that a majority of white fundamentalists and black Americans voted for opposing presidential contenders. In short, the last 20 years of American electoral history demonstrate the improbability of a black/Religious Right coalition.

No Basis for Alliance

A July 1986 national poll conducted by the *Los Angeles Times* gives few reasons for expecting that pattern to change at the national level. When members of the two groups were asked whether they would be inclined to vote for various potential presidential contenders, the fundamentalists gave their greatest support (48 percent) to George Bush, whereas blacks gave their greatest support (70 percent) to Edward Kennedy, who has announced that he has no intentions of running in 1988. And whereas 61 percent of blacks said they would be inclined to vote for Jesse Jackson, only 12 percent of white fundamentalists said they would support him. Interestingly, television evangelist Pat Robertson did not score well with either blacks (17 percent) or white fundamentalists (28 percent). When asked whom they would prefer in a presidential contest between Colorado Senator Gary Hart and Bush, blacks preferred Hart to Bush by 51 percent to 21 percent; the fundamentalists preferred Bush to Hart by 47 percent to 28 percent. When asked which political party was best for handling religious problems, 52 percent of blacks and only 21 percent of white fundamentalists named the Democratic party. Thus, the results of this recent poll suggest that in July 1986, at least, blacks and white fundamentalists appear once again to be lining up in support of opposing candidates and parties.

Differences between blacks and white fundamentalists go far beyond choices on potential candidates and partisanship. Differences on issues are prominent, as well. For example, whereas 58 percent of blacks in the survey supported affirmative action, only 36 percent of white fundamentalists did so. Whereas 72 percent of blacks thought government was not paying enough attention to blacks and other minorities, only 19 percent of white fundamentalists thought the same thing.

On non-race-specific issues as well, blacks and white fundamentalists disagreed. Whereas only 22 percent of white fundamentalists want to decrease defense spending, 44 percent of blacks want to decrease it. Whereas 35 percent of white fundamentalists want more domestic spending, 57 percent of blacks want more. Although a large majority of blacks (66 percent) support the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), only 43 percent of white fundamentalists do so.

On some issues perceived to be important to the Religious Right, blacks and white fundamentalists may agree. For example, 74 percent of blacks and 94 percent of white fundamentalists favor prayer in the public schools. But on other issues on the Religious Right's agenda, the differences persist. For example, 65 percent of white fundamentalists want homosexual relations between consenting adults to be illegal, while only 44 percent of blacks share that view. Sixty-seven percent of white fundamentalists want laws forbidding pornography to be applied to all age groups; only 28 percent of blacks want such a law. Sixty-four percent of white fundamentalists believe in creationism; only 32 percent of blacks do so. Moreover, though fundamentalists vote on the basis of these "moral" issues, blacks consider them relatively unimportant in making voting choices.

Political observers say the Religious Right is already splintering and dissipating its strength.

In short, blacks and white fundamentalists remain divided on candidates, parties, and issues. An alliance between these two groups in the national political arena is unlikely. Putting together a majority coalition including blacks and the Religious Right appears difficult indeed.

Backlash

Whether blacks would gain any political influence from such a coalition, even in the absence of issue differences, is questionable. Many political observers say the Religious Right is already splintering and dissipating its strength.

Bitterness between the Religious Right and GOP regulars is evident, and the backlash against the Religious Right may already have begun. For example, a large majority of southern Republicans (59 percent) in a June 1986 *Charlotte Observer* poll agreed with the statement that "Pat Robertson should not run for president." And a July NBC/*Wall Street Journal* poll found that 78 percent of Americans "would not vote for a candidate—like Robertson—who says he gets direct instructions from God about his political career." (Only 8 percent said they would vote for Robertson.) Similarly, a July *Denver Post* poll found a majority of Coloradoans agreeing (by 54 percent to 33 percent) that "conservative religious movements as represented by Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson are becoming a dangerous force in American politics."

Under these circumstances, blacks would have nothing to gain and much to lose by allying themselves with Religious Right groups that are losing their influence within the Republican party and on the national political scene. ■

TELESCOPE

JUSTICE OFFICIAL SIGNALS VOTING LAW CHANGE, THEN BACKS OFF

In a series of confusing public statements, Assistant Attorney General Brad Reynolds announced a major reversal of policy on voting rights enforcement and then backed off his earlier statement.

Reynolds's statements concerned Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act, which requires the Justice Department to "preclear" all voting law changes by any jurisdiction in states with a history of racial discrimination. At the American Political Science Association convention in August, Reynolds said that the "results" test would not apply to Section 5— making it easier for states to win preclearance. A few days later, after the story made national news, Reynolds called the policy change a "minor" one and announced that the Justice Department would deny preclearances "whenever the change smacks of racial bias."

Reynolds's comments drew fire from members of Congress and voting rights lawyers. Rep. Don Edwards called Reynolds's proposed policy change "an outrageous retreat on the Voting Rights Act." The Joint Center's voting rights expert, attorney Frank Parker, said, "It would mean the Justice Department would be approving a large number of racially discriminatory voting law changes that would violate the Voting Rights Act."

JCPS LAUNCHES POLICY INSTITUTE FOR BLACK PUBLIC OFFICIALS

The Joint Center has launched a new program, called the National Policy Institute (NPI), which is designed to strengthen the individual and organized capacity of black elected officials to influence public policy at all levels of government. The goals of the institute are:

1. To respond to the individual and collective needs of officials for information and data on public policy issues,
2. To help officials make their influence felt in legislative and other policy arenas,
3. To assist national organizations of black elected officials,
4. To convene a national conference of black elected officials every four years, beginning in 1988.

The institute concept grew out of a national conference of black public officials that was sponsored by the Joint Center, the National Caucus of Black State Legislators, Congressional Black Caucus, National Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials, Judicial Council of the National Bar Association, National Conference of Black Mayors, National Association of Black County Officials, and the National Association of Black School Board Members.

"The National Policy Institute will enhance the historic link between the Joint Center and black elected officials," JCPS President Eddie N. Williams said. "It will be a one-stop service station that provides research, policy analyses, data, and other information our public officials need. We are grateful to the Ford Foundation for providing funds to initiate this vital program."

Williams also announced the appointment of Russell Owens to serve as director of the National Policy Institute. Owens was formerly executive director of the Department of Employment and Training of the Commonwealth of Virginia. He has also worked for the National Governor's Association, the Governor of Colorado, and the National Association of Counties. ■

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